



# IRELAND TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

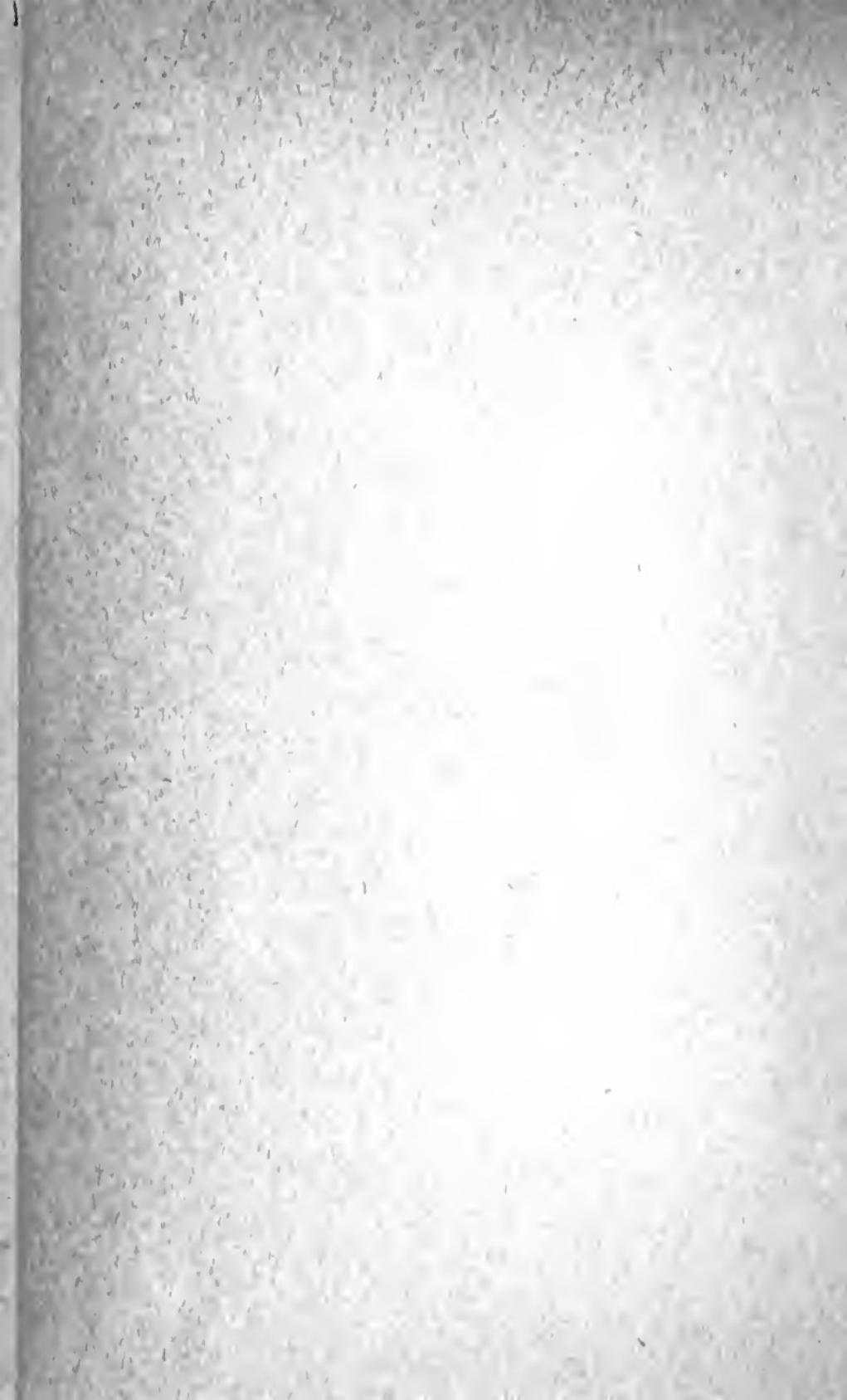
E. B. Iwan-Müller





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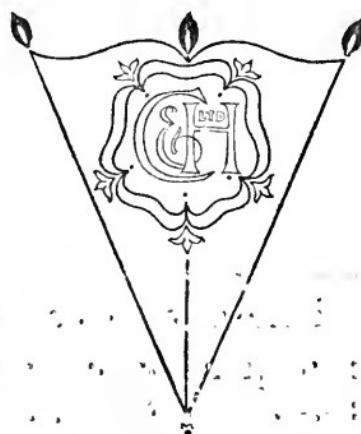
# IRELAND: TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

BY

E. B. IWAN-MÜLLER

THE 'DAILY TELEGRAPH' SPECIAL COMMISSIONER TO IRELAND

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
THE RIGHT HON. WALTER H. LONG, M.P.



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## PREFACE

THIS little book contains, in amended and slightly expanded form, a series of letters which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* during the months of February and March last. I have to thank the proprietors of that paper for the permission given, with their habitual kindness and courtesy, to republish my communications. This book, like the original articles, is quite unpretentious in scope. It aims at no more than supplying its readers with facts and movements which any of them, with a fair elementary knowledge of recent Irish history, could discover for themselves by a tour of inspection in Ireland. Had I had no other material to work upon than a stay in Ireland of little less than a month, blue books, official papers and the like, I should lay myself open to the criticism which the late Colonel E. King-Harman—from whom in years gone by I learnt much—used to pass upon the earlier Land Commissioners. “They come

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down to an estate," he was wont to say, "shove a walking-stick into the soil, smell it, and cry 'five shillings an acre.'" But circumstances gave me an opportunity of studying Irish questions on the spot twenty years and more ago, both before and after I adopted journalism as a career. The interest then aroused has never waned, and has been stimulated by the requirements of my professional duties. I had therefore a useful standard to work by. As, through the kindness of a friend, I had the use of a motor car, I was enabled not only to cover much ground, but to obtain on the road very valuable information imparted to me by persons of all politics, creeds and classes, who had no idea that I was upon a mission. I started on the principle of accepting all opinions and communications under the seal of confidence, unless those who were good enough to enlighten me desired otherwise. I found, for very obvious reasons, most preferred to have their names and all clues to their identity withheld. With this undertaking I have rigidly complied. The Irish peasants, who are the most courteous and naturally well-bred people I have ever known, always seek to please and gratify a stranger, and

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consequently more allowance than usual must be made for “the personal equation.” But as not one in a hundred with whom I talked knew who or what I was, or to what school of politics I belonged, the information I gleaned was generally trustworthy. One proof of this is that I listened to amazing criticisms of politicians of all sorts, in the most unlikely quarters. I have heard Unionist leaders assailed by Unionists and Nationalists by Nationalists, in language which left nothing to be desired in the way of candour. I do not profess to have gone to Ireland with an open mind in the sense that I tried to dismiss from my mind all that I had known and learnt of Ireland in the past. But I can say conscientiously that I have not deliberately set down aught in malice. There has been no period in my life when I had not a feeling of affection for the Irish, and of admiration for their engaging qualities and great natural ability. And though the Imperial factor was never absent from my mind, I found myself generally and often unconsciously asking myself, “How will this proposed change or that affect, not the United Kingdom, but Ireland and her inhabitants?” It is not a sufficient

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rejoinder to say, “Surely they are the best judges of that.” It might be an adequate retort if the bulk of the Irish people would do their thinking for themselves, and not, as they indolently do, let the politicians think for them. The representative principle is not understood in Ireland as it is elsewhere. A Junta not in itself representative save in the narrowest technical meaning of the word, imposes a delegate of its own—pledged to abide by the judgment of a majority of the Junta—upon seven-tenths of the constituencies in Ireland. They may be known to their constituents or they may not; they may “represent” their views, or again they may not. They come to Westminster not to represent the people, but to register the decrees of a practically irresponsible Caucus in Dublin. There is very little heckling at elections, because there are so many “unopposed returns,” and so the voter has no means of knowing or of thinking whether that which will be demanded or proposed in his name will really suit his needs and serve his interests. The chief merit of “Pat’s” *Economics for Irishmen*, so often quoted in the following pages, is that it encourages the

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Irishman to think for himself. In Ireland it is impossible to exclude the religious factor from any political disquisition, but I have striven to distinguish between spiritual and secular influence, though they are combined in the priest, and I should be sorry indeed if anything in these pages gave offence to a priesthood for which, in its spiritual capacity, it is impossible not to feel great admiration and esteem. With regard to the title of the book: the letters in the *Daily Telegraph* appeared under the heading "Ireland's Future;" I felt the title was not quite appropriate, and I altered it to "Ireland: To-day and To-morrow." Soon after I had communicated this change to the publishers I discovered to my dismay that I had unwittingly pilfered the new title from Mr. Stephen Gwynn, M.P., who had used it to cover a series of essays published some four or five years ago. I at once wrote to him to ask if he desired that I should abandon the "borrowed plume." With the courtesy and kindness to be expected of him he bade me "stick to my title," and desired me to say if I referred to the incident at all, that he himself had also unconsciously "conveyed" the

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self-same title from certain magazine articles published by Sir Horace Plunkett. I have to thank Mr. Walter Long most cordially for the admirable introduction he has been good enough to find time, in his strenuous and over-taxed hours, to write, and I need hardly add that he is in no way responsible for the views I have ventured to express.

E. B. IWAN-MÜLLER.

CHELSEA COURT,  
*April 1907.*

## INTRODUCTION

BY THE RIGHT HON. WALTER H. LONG, M.P.

I ACCEPT with great diffidence, but much pleasure, the invitation to write an introduction to this book.

As we are shortly to be plunged again into the discussion of Irish problems, it is very valuable and helpful to have the clear-sighted testimony of an intelligent student of Irish history and of Irish affairs. The charge which is most frequently made against the Unionist Party is that their only policy is one of Coercion, and that under the rule of England, Ireland has suffered heavily, and is consequently a long way behind England and Scotland in her general social condition. A careful study of the

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following pages will, I think, convince the impartial reader that there is no foundation whatever for this charge. While, no doubt, the Unionists have strenuously maintained the law, and thereby given freedom to all to go about their business in their own way so long as they do not interfere with their neighbours, they have at the same time passed a long list of measures which have had for their object the improvement of the general condition of Ireland. This book shows in the clearest possible manner how remarkable has been the success of much of this legislation : the development of the means of internal communication, the establishment of the Congested Districts Board, and of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, have all been giant strides in this direction. If Ireland still lags behind in the race for industrial and

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commercial prosperity, it will, I think, be found from a perusal of this volume that the fault lies, not with England and English rule, but rather with those people in Ireland who have preferred political agitation to agricultural and industrial development. The very interesting statistics which are here given prove how remarkable has been the progress of Ireland in the last twenty-five years, and afford, it seems to me, just ground for believing that a continuance of recent methods of administration would result in even more marked improvements.

One question that is always to the fore is that of Education in all its branches. In regard to Higher Education, I do not intend to do more than remark that it is proposed to legislate, in what seems to be the most controversial manner, in reference to a subject which is outside the domain of purely Irish

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questions, inasmuch as it affects the standing and position of Universities throughout the world.

In regard to Intermediate Education, all that I think is really necessary is that it shall be linked up with Primary Education, and that it shall be made somewhat easier for an intelligent boy in the elementary school to gain access to higher grade or intermediate school, in order that he may be properly trained for the work of life.

Primary Education has a special character in Ireland, which does call for some reference. The past history of Ireland in regard to Primary Education is plainly set forth in these pages, and it is shown how unfair it is to allege, as is so frequently done, that the unsatisfactory condition of elementary schools is due to English misrule. The real truth is that in order to maintain in its

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entirety what is the purest form of denominational Education which is to be found in existence in any country, schools have been multiplied to so large an extent that it has proved impossible either adequately to maintain their buildings or properly to equip them with a teaching staff. This is not the fault of English rule, but is the inevitable result of the system which has been deliberately adopted in Ireland. While it is, I fear, hopeless to expect that any great change can be made in this respect, I think these pages show that it would be possible to do something of a practical and substantial kind which would lead to an improvement, and would therefore be of great advantage to the Irish people.

Anybody who has read a small volume recently published, called *Economics for Irishmen*, by "Pat," must be impressed by the plain story there told, which shows

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that the real reason why Ireland has not progressed so much as England and Scotland is, as I have already stated, because too much attention has been paid to politics and too little to business.

The following pages give the results of a careful and intelligent study of Irish problems by one who has been familiar with Irish questions for many years, who has been frequently in Ireland, and who is well able to form trustworthy opinions. It is, I think, made quite clear that whatever changes of Government Ireland wants, she does not require anything in the form of Devolution, still less of Home Rule.

It is plainly shown in the reference to Devolution, that in some ways it would be found more dangerous than Home Rule, as the writer tersely says—“ Nobody would be more disappointed if it (Devolution) proved a success than

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those who granted it as an instalment would be, or those who accepted it as such. The very members who would sit on this elected Body would be men pledged by their past utterances to prove the utter insufficiency of the expedient. No one who knows Ireland can doubt that such proof would be immediately forthcoming." This is a very powerful and, in my judgment, an absolutely unanswerable criticism. If we believe that a friend of ours is in danger and is likely to be seriously attacked, it would be a prudent and sensible act to present him with a revolver and cartridges in order that he may use them for his own defence against his enemies; but if we have reason to fear that the first use he will make of the revolver will be to turn it upon ourselves, then we shall be rash indeed if we give him this means of doing us mortal injury. This appears to be the situation in regard

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to Devolution. If we are justified in believing that any measure of this kind will be employed by the Irish people to develop their own industries and generally to help themselves, we may regard its concession with complacency. If, on the other hand, we know, as we do without any room for doubt, that it would be used by the majority in Ireland in order to advance the cause which they have at heart, viz. to make Home Rule the inevitable consequence, surely we shall be shutting our eyes to plain facts and be guilty of criminal folly if, from some sentimental or other reason, we concede demands made in the spirit indicated by the remarks I have quoted.

What is really wanted is that the people of England shall look this question fairly and squarely in the face, shall realise for themselves what the past history of Ireland has been, and what are

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the true results which have flowed from it, and shall also realise what are the demands now made by the Nationalist Party, and how far they are likely to be effected by the grant of any measure of self-government. The demand hitherto made has been that Ireland shall be put in a position precisely similar to that occupied by England and Scotland. But a proposal to establish a National Council in Dublin which is in some way or other to intervene between Parliament and the Government of Ireland, is not to put Ireland in the same position as England and Scotland, but to put her in a totally different position ; and we ought to know whether the experiment is to be made in Ireland in order that it may be tried later on in the rest of the United Kingdom. Surely, before granting it to Ireland we ought to be satisfied that there is some reasonable prospect of success, and that

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it will satisfy those aspirations which are indulged in by a large section of the Irish people, viz. that it will secure a greater measure of prosperity for the country.

It is because I believe that a careful study of these pages will help the student of Irish affairs to form a clearer judgment of the real issues before us that I commend them to all who are interested in the solution of the Irish problem, in other words every thoughtful citizen in the Empire. We are told by the Government that the ultimate goal they have before them is Home Rule on the Colonial model. These pages make it perfectly clear that Ireland left to herself must go steadily back, and that if she is to advance she must have the benefit of the credit and resources of the United Kingdom at her back. If the reader comes to the conclusion, to which I think he must come, that whatever there

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is which is unsatisfactory in Ireland is due to the causes which are described here, and not to the causes which are so constantly alleged by Nationalists, he will, I think, be forced to the further conclusion that no tampering with the system of government will be likely to do any good. What is wanted, on the contrary, is a continuance of that policy which has already done so much for Ireland, and which, if given a fair chance, would be able to do a great deal more.

The statement that Unionist feeling in Ireland has weakened, and that there is growing, even in Belfast and the north, a demand for something in the form of Devolution, and that there is less enthusiasm for the cause of the Union is, I believe, altogether misleading. Circumstances connected with the government of Ireland in recent years have no doubt led a certain section of the Unionist Party

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in Ireland to express themselves in no uncertain terms as to the treatment they conceive they have received at the hands of the British Government, and this has been interpreted as implying that they are less enthusiastic about the cause of the Union. The truth is that occasionally men in authority are captivated by the charms of the dark Rosalin, and are tempted to believe that they have found the golden key which is to open the door through which Ireland shall pass to peace, prosperity and contentment. In Ireland, as in other countries, there is no such key to be found, and those who have tried the experiment have to their sorrow learned the truth of this simple statement. These happy results which we all desire to see accomplished can only be attained in Ireland, as elsewhere, by a combination of various conditions which will be produced by efforts very similar

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to those which have produced them in other parts of the United Kingdom and in some parts of Ireland herself.

A study of the history and results of the application to Ireland of the Local Government system previously granted to England and Scotland is very helpful in considering the new policy. Startling figures have recently been given in the public press, criticised no doubt by Lord Dunraven, but in no sense disposed of or even qualified by him, which show that not only have the party in a majority in Ireland used their privileges to secure party majorities upon the Councils in all the counties in Ireland, save five of the northern ones, but have, it is asserted, gone even farther than this in the selection they have made of the officials to serve under them. In some parts of England and Scotland and of Wales there was, no doubt, an attempt to man

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the Councils with men of one political party, but so far as I know there never has been an attempt over here to demand of officials adherence to a certain political faith before they could be regarded as eligible for public appointments. This, I think, bears eloquent testimony to the opinion so strongly held by Unionists, that it would not be safe or fair to the minority to extend in any way the power already possessed by the majority in Ireland.

It is customary for some people to criticise Unionists in Ireland as being unreasonable and bigoted. I think these critics altogether fail to realise how humiliating and painful is the position of an Irishman anxious to live in Ireland in the home of his fathers, and to participate in the development of Irish industrial and agricultural life—in other words, to do his duty as an Irishman—

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when he finds he is precluded from taking any share in local affairs, simply and solely because he is loyal to the Union, and will not for personal gain or advantage abandon the platform on which he stands in common with the great mass of his fellow-countrymen in the United Kingdom. Let any man who takes part in the government of his county or town ask himself what his view would be if he knew that he would not be allowed to serve on any local authority, however experienced, industrious and zealous he may be, if he happens to hold views which are inconsistent with those held by the majority in the country; he will then be able to realise what is the position. No doubt, a similar state of things will be found in a few isolated cases in England and Scotland, but with the exception of the Unionist corner of Ulster, it is universal

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throughout the whole of Ireland. Surely, we must ask ourselves, what is the experience of the past, and what have been the uses made by Irishmen of the privileges already given them? It is by tests such as these that we can alone arrive at a just conclusion as to any fresh development.

By no means the least interesting or least instructive portions of this book are those in which the writer classifies the various forms of Irish Government reforms. It will, perhaps, be a little difficult at first for the ordinary reader to appreciate the conclusion at which he arrives, viz. that of the three policies—Separation, Home Rule, or Devolution—the worst is the latter; but I entirely agree with him. Those who wish to alter the Irish Government, and bring it into conformity with the somewhat cant phrase, “the wishes of the Irish people,” must surely do so in whole and not in

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part. This attempt to deal with the Irish question by some “half-measure” was disposed of unanswerably by Mr. Gladstone more than twenty years ago. The views which he then expressed hold good, if possible, with double force to-day. Devolution would produce chaos in government, would weaken the bond which binds Ireland to Great Britain, would undoubtedly pave the way for Home Rule, would add immensely to the complexities of the problem, would prove embarrassing to the United Kingdom, and would leave us with an even greater responsibility than we possess at the present time.

Home Rule is worse from the United Kingdom point of view than Separation, because, while it would mean practically the same thing, it would leave Great Britain with the responsibility for, and the mischief caused by, all the steps

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taken by the Irish Administration, as the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament would be held to be a real safeguard, while the most casual student must realise that once you establish a Parliament in Dublin it will be practically impossible without the use of arms to enforce the Imperial veto.

There remains, then, only Separation, a policy which, I believe, no citizen of the United Kingdom will seriously contemplate, and yet from the United Kingdom point of view it is probably less objectionable than the other two, because it would make it perfectly clear that Ireland, and Ireland alone, would be responsible for her attitude in all questions both Imperial and local.

But the question must also be examined from the Imperial point of view.

The Prime Minister's declaration is to the effect that the model he has in view

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is the Colonial one. Surely it must be conceded that the control of the Imperial Parliament over Canada or Australia, or any of our self-governing Colonies, is of the most slender description. In this connection I would venture to quote Lord Rosebery's striking sentence in his speech the other day to the Liberal League: "I am also under the impression that whereas we are delighted to see self-government carried to the extreme of independence, united only to the Mother Country by the Crown, in Australia and Canada, it would be a very different matter when it is in a contiguous island which prides itself on the disloyalty of its public declarations." This is the carefully-considered utterance of a great Liberal statesman, not of a Southern Irish Unionist or a Northern Orange-man. If any of these Colonies elected to abandon the connection with the Mother

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Country and join some other government, is it conceivable that by any means we could prevent them from doing so? Their loss would be a great disaster to us; we should suffer in prestige, in strength, and in our position amongst the nations of the world; but for purposes of national defence, for the protection of our own shores, we should not be in any way affected. Colonies which lie thousands of miles from our shores cannot seriously affect for good or for evil the precautions which we think it necessary to adopt in order to secure ourselves from invasion and attack. This cannot be said of Ireland. She lies athwart our western seaboard, she could do immense mischief if she wished in times of national strain and peril, and surely a great people, such as we are, conscious of our strength, mindful of our responsibilities, grateful for the splendid heritage which we have

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received as a result of the devotion, sacrifice, and labour of our forefathers, cannot now falter in the supreme moment when we are called upon to decide as between Unity and Separation.

As I have said, this book plainly demonstrates the dangers of the two alternative policies—Home Rule under Imperial supremacy, or Devolution ; and whether from the Irish point of view, or from the larger point of view of the interests of the United Kingdom, I am confident that a close study of the conclusions at which the writer has arrived, and of the grounds upon which he bases them, will materially assist us in arriving at a wise decision.

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# IRELAND TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

## CHAPTER I

### YESTERDAY

TO begin a book on “To-day and To-morrow” with a chapter on “Yesterday” is but another way of asserting the truism that a forecast of what is to happen is visionary unless it is based upon what has happened, and is happening. For the purpose of this treatise it is not necessary to go further back in Irish history than to a period within the memory of men who have reached, or have just passed, middle age. It is sufficient for me to review very briefly the course of events since I first knew Ireland and something about Ireland. In the early seventies personal reasons and friendships induced me to study the Irish problem ; my actual experience of the country began in the later seventies and the early eighties, and was renewed in the years

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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of Mr. Arthur Balfour's Chief Secretaryship. Since 1889 I had not been in the country till I was despatched upon a mission for the *Daily Telegraph* in the early days of 1907. To revisit Ireland after an interval of eighteen years is to recall many memories, grave and gay, social and political, many hopes disappointed, some fears not realised, and to find many changes expected and unexpected.

In the early seventies the country was still affected in various ways by Mr. Gladstone's attacks upon the Upas Tree, whose poisonous exhalations he believed were responsible for the chronic diseases of disaffection and poverty under which Ireland suffered. The three stems of that desolating trunk were the Established Church of Ireland, the then existing system of Land Tenure, and the lack of higher education for Catholics upon which problem Mr. Gladstone came to hopeless grief. He disestablished and disendowed the Church ; he began, imagining that he was also completing, a work of agrarian reform, which has led to results he never contemplated, and has necessitated further revolutions from which Mr. Gladstone himself would have shrunk in economic horror

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## Yesterday

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had he anticipated them. The treatment of the Protestant Church—except for the acknowledged and fatal fact that it was offered as a sop to agitators and outrage-mongers—was not in itself an act of injustice, though, as Mr. Disraeli shrewdly remarked at the time, “confiscation is contagious.” It is freely admitted by most members of the now dis-established Church that the injury done to the Protestant Episcopalian cause was nothing like as serious as had been anticipated, and that compensating advantages had neutralised very many of the initial evils. It was otherwise with Land Reform. In 1871 were sown the seeds, as Mr. Gladstone admitted a decade later, of a complete revolution of the whole political, social, and economic system of Ireland. Beginning with a laudable ambition to redress acknowledged wrongs and real grievances, the policy adopted led, through stages as inevitable as unforeseen, from single ownership of the soil (qualified by the Ulster and other “customs”) to dual ownership, and from dual ownership back to single ownership, with this difference, that the class who were tenants in 1870 are fast becoming the owners in 1907. As the late

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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Lord Dufferin said in 1882, "the tenant and the landlord were put in the same bed, and the tenant was sure to kick the landlord out."

It is not my purpose to discuss the merits or demerits of the various and interminable series of Agrarian Reform Acts and of Purchase Acts which have led up to the present situation in Ireland. Things are what they are, and the consequences will be what they will be. One patent, palpable, and indisputable fact remains, that the chief object sought by the original sponsors for these multitudinous experiments has not been attained, whatever be the value of the bye-products. The avowed aim and the alleged justification of these "drastic" and "heroic" measures were to win the Irish people from their disaffection and from their discontent with what they called, and still call, "English rule." That goal is further off than ever. Sir James, the brother of Dan O'Connell, who did not share the Liberator's views, was alive when Mr. Gladstone laid his axe to the roots of the Upas Tree. He told a very distinguished Irish Catholic, who repeated his words to me, that Ireland was more disaffected in 1803 than in 1798; more disaffected after

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## Yesterday

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Catholic Emancipation than in 1803; more disaffected after the Reform Act than in 1828; and still more disaffected after the Disestablishment of the Church than in 1832. And who will say that Irish feeling is better disposed towards Great Britain in 1907 than it was thirty years ago? Certainly no one who has studied Ireland at first hand during this generation. Personally, I do not hesitate to predict that Ireland under Home Rule or Devolution would be even more implacable than she is now, and, if ever she secured that absolute independence which is the pole-star of every "political" agitation, Great Britain would find in Erin the bitterest enemy—impotent as she might be—in the whole world.

In later chapters I hope to show that there is a more agreeable alternative to this gloomy forecast. But for the moment I am dealing with the existing state of things. In the opening seventies there was a considerable number of Loyalists, who, smarting under "the spoliation of a Church and the confiscation of property"—for thus they regarded Mr. Gladstone's policy—started a movement in favour of Home Rule, which in no way implied disloyalty to

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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the Crown, or a desire for the disintegration of the Empire. The originators were Conservatives in one sense of the word, or the other, and mainly in both. Mr. Isaac Butt and Colonel Edward King Harman were conspicuous members. They believed that a Parliament on College Green, dealing solely with Irish affairs, could not injure their class and individual interests more than the Parliament at Westminster, in which five-sixths of the members were entirely ignorant of the circumstances and conditions of the "other island" for which they legislated. Their argument was, "if we are to be robbed, let us be robbed by our own people, who, at least, will know what they are doing." They did not, however, expect to be robbed, and there are those living who still think that the grant of a Conservative measure of Home Rule, such as would have satisfied Butt, might have checked the incipient movement for complete separation. I confess I shared that belief once, but I am sure now that it was a delusion.

At that time, in the early and middle seventies, there were recurring periods of agrarian agitation, accompanied by the in-

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separable perpetration of murder, arson, mutilation of cattle, and other atrocities which have almost continuously stained the annals of a people in many respects the most lovable in the world. But until Michael Davitt reappeared upon the scene there was no concerted and organised anti-landlord agitation. Where the remnants of the Whiteboys, the Moonlighters, and other secret societies were relatively strong, or where individual landlords or agents were, for good or bad reasons, very unpopular, or where poverty was so intolerable as to drive men to desperation, there outrages of every kind were perpetrated. When Michael Davitt was released from prison he formulated an elaborate and well-thought-out scheme, over which he had brooded in his cell. Davitt was a man of great intellectual power, of iron will, which penal servitude had not broken or bent, of indomitable energy, and of that ruthless vindictiveness which his class in Ireland shares with the Southern Italians. He hated Irish landlords, because he had witnessed in his boyhood, and had suffered from, the eviction of his peasant mother; but he loathed England more than he hated landlords, and his early Fenianism,

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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which sent him to a felon's cell, was prompted by that deadly hostility to England and to all things English. Of him it might almost be said, as Macaulay said of Warren Hastings, that he was a "great man, and he was not a bad man." He wrought incalculable mischief in Ireland and to Ireland, but it must be added that what he did was done out of a passionate, perverse love of his country, which in his mind spelt hatred of England. To his credit must be placed the fact that at no little personal peril to himself he won over a majority of the old I.R.B.—the Fenians—in America to the adoption of Parnell's so-called "Constitutional Agitation." Indeed, for the last years of his life he went armed in the streets of Dublin. If he did not grasp the "throttle-valve" of the crime, which dogged the footsteps of the Land League, and which was locally the work of the minority of the Fenian organisation he had defeated, it may be said in partial condonation that the history of revolution teems with similar instances of what Mr. John Morley described in his sketch of Danton as "sombre acquiescence."

The mainspring of the movement which he set going was not, as he admitted, his own

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## Yesterday

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invention. He had pondered in gaol the pregnant words of Fintan Lalor, who, in the seditious paper *The Felon*, had declared that the cry for the Repeal of the Union was impotent. Repeal, he said in effect, will never move by itself unless it is attached to some other cry, which will drag it as a locomotive drags a train, and that locomotive would be discovered in the form of agrarian agitation. Neither Lalor nor Davitt seemed to realise that their "locomotive" robbed the cause of Irish independence of all its heroism. Separation was to be effected not by the invocation of the majestic spirit of patriotism, but by appeals to cupidity in its least attractive guise. It must be admitted that disastrous success crowned for awhile the discovery by Lalor of the locomotive and its dare-devil driving by Davitt. The Land League was started. Parnell, himself a landlord of a somewhat indifferent type, reluctantly associated himself with it, on the condition, that Davitt should bring over the American Fenians—and the funds they collected—to his side. There was a transformation scene. In place of a guerilla warfare waged against a few rapacious land-

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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lords and their agents, sporadic, casual, and fitful, there was substituted a carefully-organised campaign against all owners of the soil. There was no province of Ireland, and very few counties, which were not involved. No kind of distinction was made between "good" and "bad" landlords except in the rare cases of the landed proprietor who threw in his lot with Parnell and the extremists. The Land League became the governing body in Ireland, and the *de jure* Administration was paralysed in its attempt to cope with the *de facto* Junta. The usurping executive had its own code, and as Mr. Gladstone, in his pre-Parnellite days, asserted, its laws, like all other laws, required a sanction. That sanction, as the same authority told us, was the murder and outrage that were not to be denounced, and the ostracism not yet known as boycotting.

I was in Ireland during part of that reign of terror. The story of the atrocities committed is told in the unchallenged evidence given before the "Special Commission," and need not be revived, though it should not be forgotten. I have gone armed to church and to dinner parties, and I have been forbidden by

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my hosts to be out after sunset. In a house in which I stayed in the worst of the “bad times” in the heart of Ireland, a neighbour came with his two daughters to dinner. He asked my host and his if he could put up the two young ladies for the night, promising to send a dogcart over next morning, with day clothes for them in place of the evening dress in which they had come to dine. The reason was this : in the afternoon he had received a warning, in a handwriting familiar—though the penman was unknown—to the guest and his host, signed “A Fenian Friend.” It stated that an attempt to shoot Colonel X.—the guest—would be made on his return from dinner, and that Colonel X.’s coachman was “in it.” Offers on the part of my host to send for a police escort to the neighbouring little town were refused. “Leave it to me,” said the Colonel. He started off after dinner in the brougham in which he had come. Next morning the dogcart came with the ladies’ requirements, and a note from their father. He had said nothing to the coachman till they neared the gates of his host’s demesne ; then he stopped the carriage, bade the coachman jump off the box, get inside

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the carriage, and give his master his cloak. The man, white as a leper, obeyed, for the Colonel was armed. When they drove up unattacked to the door, the coachman was in a dead faint on the floor of the brougham. Whether he was to have made a signal, or whether he had managed to give one, could never be known. He offered no word of objection to his instant and uncompensated dismissal, and his cowed and abject demeanour was a sufficient witness against him outside a law court. A single personal dramatic experience of that kind is branded for ever on one's memory. But the same sort of drama—often enough a terrible tragedy—was being enacted all around us every week.

So demoralised was Ireland at that time that half a countryside would know beforehand when an attempt was to be made on the life of a particular landlord or agent, and not a few were cognisant of the hour, place, and names of the assassins. A friend of mine, himself a landlord, was riding home at dusk from a little country town on market day. There were, as was usual enough, knots of people in the only street. An outside car, driven by a con-

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stable, came in with no occupant but the driver. My friend heard from one of the groups the words, "Begorra, they've got the inspector, too." Next day he learned that an agent had been shot, though escorted by an inspector with two constables armed with rifles. The inspector stopped with the dying man, and sent one of the constables into the town for a doctor. It was the appearance of the inspector's car without its owner that provoked the remark overheard by my friend. From this it was clear that the group of persons who were gloating over the supposed "getting of the inspector, too" were well aware that an attempt was to be made upon the life of the agent. Yet no one was convicted of the murder. In those days the Queen's writ did not run in large districts in Ireland. Juries would not convict even in cases where the evidence for the Crown was overwhelming. Nor was this scandalous miscarriage of justice due entirely or, perhaps, even mainly, to sympathy on the part of jurors with crime or criminals. It was largely attributable to a selfish fear for their own personal safety; a form of cowardice which extorted from the

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late Lord Morris the *bon-mot* that the failure of the Crown to secure convictions was a matter of "jury's prudence." When the Land League was fully organised, and its laws were enforced by the "sanctions" described by Mr. Gladstone, that cruel oppression of the poor by the poor, so painfully characteristic of Irish agrarian agitation, reached its climax. It was easier to protect the landlord and the agent, because they were marked men, and relatively few in number. Not so with the humbler victims of the league who had sinned against the laws of the all-powerful association. For the most part members of this class did not, dared not, inform the police of their danger, and they suffered accordingly.

I was in Ireland again when Lord Salisbury's first short-lived Administration attempted to govern Ireland under the ordinary law. We do not know, perhaps we shall never know, what promises were dangled before the eyes of Mr. Parnell by Lord Randolph Churchill. But it is indisputable that the former, who ever hated the Radical party in general and Mr. Gladstone in particular, even when *dona ferentes*, expected and hoped to gain more

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from the Tories than from their opponents. In any case, there was then—as there is now—a suspension of the guerilla warfare, a fact significant enough of the ability, often denied, of the Irish leaders to check crime when they liked. But even then no petty jury would convict in cases of agrarian offences of a less serious order. A colleague of the late Judge William O'Brien told me, at the time, that the latter, holding an assize—at Cork, if I remember aright—was much annoyed by the exuberant applause which broke out in court as juries returned verdict after verdict of “not guilty” in the teeth of the most conclusive evidence. At last, after a defendant—if a prisoner who had absolutely no defence can be so called—had been set free without the jury leaving the box, a louder demonstration of approval burst forth from a corner of the court. “Who are the men,” asked Judge O'Brien of his clerk, “who are making that noise?” “Sure, my lord,” was the prompt reply, “that is the jury that is going to try the next case.”<sup>1</sup> As soon as it was made

<sup>1</sup> The classical case of the refusal of Irish juries to find verdicts in accordance with the evidence occurred years

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clear that Lord Salisbury and his colleagues had no intention of paltering with Home Rule, outrages began afresh. After Mr. Gladstone had announced his discovery of that political salvation—which Sir Henry Campbell-Bann-

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before this. An agent was shot at, but missed just outside the town of Ennis. The police, searching the scene of the attempt, happed upon a human thumb which had evidently been blown off by the bursting of a gun. They therefore picketed the house of the most skilful surgeon in the town, and sure enough, after dark, a cart drew up at the door and a man was carried in with his hand swathed in bandages. The police entered and arrested him. The surgeon assured them that unless the man's hand was immediately amputated, he would die of blood poisoning. The police therefore waited and secured the hand, which, with the thumb, was preserved in spirits of wine. The prisoner was taken to the infirmary and in due course put upon his trial before a common jury. Though it was certain that any common jury would acquit him, counsel for the defence challenged several jurors. After the inevitable verdict of "not guilty" the prisoner's counsel told the Crown Prosecutor that the prisoner wanted back the hand that had been produced in evidence. The Prosecutor consented on two conditions: (1) That the late defendant should ask for it in open court; (2) That his counsel should tell him on what ground he had challenged the jurors. Both conditions were accepted. The prisoner asked for his hand and got it and duly "waked" it. His counsel said that though any jury was good enough for him, to "mak siccar" he had challenged every juror wearing a neck-tie!

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man boasted he had made "long before"—there was another lull.

Then came the defeat of the first Home Rule Bill in Parliament and in the country. Once more, and in a most determined fashion, the forces of lawlessness and disorder were let loose. Once more it seemed as if the Queen's writ would cease to run; once more, and on a larger scale, the poor were oppressed by the poor. When things were at their worst Mr. Arthur Balfour took the helm. The appointment was received with hilarious derision by the Nationalists, who boasted that they would "soon break this butterfly." In a very few weeks they changed their tune. I visited Ireland when the fight was raging between the forces of disorder and the Executive strengthened by an efficient and permanent Crimes Act. The result was not very long in doubt. The constabulary knew that they would be backed by the Chief Secretary in the fair and prompt execution of their duties, whatever the Nationalist members might say in England or the *Freeman* and *United Ireland* write in Ireland. Knowing this, they did their duty splendidly, and with a moderation

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and self-restraint in circumstances which would have provoked to violence every other police force in the world, not excluding our own admirable London “Bobbies.” I have seen them at work under conditions in which they evoked my admiration to the utmost, so thoroughly self-possessed and forbearing were they though subjected to every kind of assault and insult.

I was in Ireland again when the cause of order had triumphed ; when the sword of the law could be put back in its scabbard, but not discarded. Remedial measures were passed, the virtue of which was not impaired or destroyed—as had too often happened in the past—by the fact that the redress of grievances had been extorted by fear, or was offered as a sop to outrage-mongers. Probably no more sincere and gratifying tribute was paid to Mr. Balfour’s magnificent success in Ireland than that which fell from the lips of an old peasant woman, when I was in Clare at the close of the war against the Leagues. It had been a good agricultural season, and the old lady had come to pay her rent to the agent. The latter greeted her with “Well, Betty, you’ve had a good year.” “Sure, your honour, I have,” was the reply, “glory be

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to God and bloody Balfour." The glibness with which the expletive fell from her lips was proof that it was thus the Chief Secretary was described in the vernacular, and at the same time was a striking testimony of gratitude to the man who had enabled this poor woman and her class to profit by a "good year" without fear or intimidation. Even to-day you may go, as I have been, through the worst districts of the West and South, and you will hear from all sorts and conditions of men such expressions as, "Balfour was a good man; his politics was all wrong, but he did more good for us than all the Secretaries we have had." It was said at the time that it is easy to govern under a Coercion Act, and that recourse to this last weapon of civilised society is a proof that "English rule," as it is called, is a failure. Let those who maintain this position remember that if since the passing of the Act of Union some eighty Coercion Acts have been necessary; under the belauded and melodramatically lamented "Grattan's Parliament" no less than fifty-four measures of the same kind became law in the short period of eighteen years.

These reminiscences are nearly twenty years

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old, but the intervening period of personal inexperience of Irish affairs was of advantage to one who had to study afresh the question on the spot. The knowledge I gained then supplies a convenient standard whereby to measure the situation as it presents itself to-day. There have been changes, and beneficial changes, in the social and economical conditions of Ireland ; but the old objections to Home Rule or to Devolution, or the ultimate goal of both—complete Separation, or a merely nominal union with Great Britain—are at least as strong as they were twenty years ago.

## CHAPTER II

### IRELAND TO-DAY

TWO things must strike any one whose personal acquaintance with Ireland has been interrupted by a gap of nearly twenty years. To put them in order of importance, the first is the indisputable improvement in the material condition of the people ; and the second is the appearance of cross-currents in the stream of political thought, a phenomenon not to be observed some twenty years ago. The nature and tendency of these cross-currents will be dealt with more fully in the next chapter.

What I have called the more important change is the improved condition of the people in all material respects. This change for the better is patent to one who knew the country twenty years ago. It is obvious to the eye. In every part of Ireland, especially in the worst districts of the West, the peasant—whether labourer, tenant, or small owner—is better fed, healthier looking, and much better clothed than he was

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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twenty years ago. Tried by all the tests which the economist applies in gauging the wealth of a nation, Ireland has made marked progress in the last twenty years. Whether we study the deposits in joint-stock banks or savings banks, or consider the returns of railway traffic, passenger and goods alike ; or have regard to the quantity of cattle reared, or to the state of the too few great manufacturing industries, we read the same story of constant and—considering that Ireland is as to five-sixths of its area an agricultural country—most remarkable advance. I have been told, even by people of much authority, that the very existence of large accumulated funds in the banks is a proof, not of Ireland's progress, but of her retrogression ! The pessimists, and I should not cite them unless they were "persons of importance," declare that these talents are hidden away in joint-stock napkins, because there is no means of employing them profitably in Ireland. Yet it seems to every one else that Ireland could do with a great deal more capital than is at present at her command. The soil of Ulster, for instance, is by no means the most naturally favoured in Ireland ; yet over

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## Ireland To-day

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large areas of the province, the results of capital judiciously employed, and of labour intelligently applied to the cultivation of the land stare one in the face. If there is an explanation of the accumulated savings, other than that which is the natural and, as far as I can judge, the true one, it is that there is a lack of confidence in the country. That might be a reasonable interpretation of the phenomenon, if it were a sudden and recent one, and only observed when, as we are told, the country is "on the eve of great changes." That is not the case, as I shall show later on in another connection. The increase in these accumulations has been steady, consistent, and of long duration. The only interruption to the upward movement occurred significantly enough while the fate of Mr. Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill hung in the balance. Money deposited in Irish banks was withdrawn, and invested or transferred to banks across the Channel. But to those who know Ireland the most instructive feature of all is the fact that to-day only a very small percentage of the population, even in the congested districts, depends for sustenance entirely upon the potato. There was a partial

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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failure of the potato crop in the autumn, largely due, it must be said frankly, to neglect in spraying the plants when there was a prospect of a more than average yield. But in spite of this shortage, there was no widespread famine, such as Mr. Arthur Balfour had to cope with during his administration of Ireland. No relief works had to be established on an extensive scale; no appeal had to be made to the public to alleviate distress. And the simple reason is that the potato—the doubtful blessing which Sir Walter Raleigh is supposed to have conferred upon Ireland—is no longer the staple food even of the poorest. They consume large quantities of meal; but even to obtain that demands some money made or earned.

The truth is, though few Englishmen unacquainted with Ireland can be brought to believe it, that Ireland is not a very poor country. There are, unhappily, districts that are poor, and miserably poor; but for a country which in the main is devoted to agriculture, Ireland is far better off than, say, Southern Italy, and infinitely wealthier and more prosperous than many provinces of Russia, endowed with

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a more productive soil. Nor is there in the towns anything like the poverty and destitution which the squalid appearance of the poorer classes naturally suggests to the casual visitor or the tourist. I need not speak of Belfast.<sup>1</sup> That great and flourishing city—which owes the seeds of its prosperity to the preferential treatment of William III., who created and “protected” the linen trade by way of compensation for the destruction of the woollen industry—compares favourably with the manufacturing centres of Great Britain. There is poverty there, as there always must be in populous cities—and there are “slums,” too, which are appealing to the public conscience to “end or mend.” So there are in London, and Manchester, and Birmingham, and Glasgow. But I take Dublin itself, and for two reasons. In the first place, outside the two staple industries of brewing and distilling, the capital of Ireland has no predominant trade; with these two exceptions, and apart from the professional classes, its inhabitants live by dealing. In the second place, it has been my good fortune to have placed in my hands the results

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A.

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of a social-economic investigation, conducted on much the same lines as those followed by Mr. Charles Booth in London and by Mr. Rowntree in York and elsewhere. The inquiry, which was made some two years ago, was not started for any political, philanthropic, or social purpose. Those who instituted it wished for information for special reasons, which, I may add, if likely at all to tend to over-statement, would have led to exaggeration rather than to depreciation of existing poverty and distress. The work was done by experts, and tested by experts, and, if I am not mistaken, the report has been confidentially asked for by the Local Government Board, and been supplied to them. A Dublin ward was taken, which, though not absolutely the poorest in the city, was amongst the poorest, and was inferior in all respects to most other districts inhabited by the working classes. That will be evident enough from the statistics. The condition of 1,254 families, roughly equal to 5,000 individuals, was tested. The scale was large enough to exclude accident or "special circumstances." The houses were mainly tenement houses, belonging to a bygone day. The

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average rent paid was 3s.  $0\frac{3}{4}d.$  per week, or 2s. a room. The number of rooms was 1,903, which worked out at 1.52 rooms per family. The average number of cubic feet per person was 505.36, and for the purposes of this investigation children were reckoned as adults. The standard for such rooms is put at 400, and therefore, in the respect of air-space these tenements rank high. The average wages per week made up from all sources was as follows :—

	£ s. d.
Head of the family . . . . .	$0\ 15\ 11\frac{1}{2}$
Other members . . . . .	$0\ 5\ 11\frac{1}{2}$
Lodger . . . . .	$0\ 0\ 3$
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Total . . . . .	$\underline{\underline{£1\ 2\ 2}}$

The accommodation in percentage of cases :

Sufficient . . . . .	67.62
Partly sufficient . . . . .	7.02
Insufficient . . . . .	$25.36$
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	100.00

Number of families occupying—

One room . . . . .	59.17
Two rooms . . . . .	32.14
Three rooms . . . . .	6.78
Four rooms . . . . .	1.59
Five rooms . . . . .	.32
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	100.00

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I may add that these "housings," 1,903 in number, occupied 436 houses in sixty-two streets. The sanitary arrangements were very far from satisfactory. The average of families using one lavatory was 4·68, representing 17·34 individuals. In 134 cases—for which the tenants were solely responsible in ninety-six—the arrangements were so bad as to be injurious to health.

There is always great difficulty in getting parents to declare the existence of any disease in their families not of a character which has to be notified to the health authorities. In 150 cases, however, this information was secured; and the result showed that in 12 per cent. of these families there was consumption, mainly attributable to dirty surroundings. In these ancient houses nothing much is done when an old tenant leaves and a new-comer enters, beyond the application of a dose of friendly whitewash, and the germs of disease are as often as not transmitted from one family to another.

The following table shows the proportion of families, to their gross earnings :—

Under 5s. per week	.	.	.	.	4·31
5s. to 10s.	.	.	.	.	8·53

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10s. to 15s.	.	.	.	.	10·37
15s. to 20s.	.	.	.	.	29·03
20s. to 25s.	.	.	.	.	15·23
25s. to 30s.	.	.	.	.	11·01
30s. to 35s.	.	.	.	.	7·09
35s. to 40s.	.	.	.	.	4·78
40s. to 45s.	.	.	.	.	2·15
45s. to 50s.	.	.	.	.	1·27
50s. to 55s.	.	.	.	.	1·12
55s. to 60s.	.	.	.	.	.88
Over 60s.	.	.	.	.	1·36
Out of work	.	.	.	.	1·83

It will be interesting to compare these figures with a typical impoverished district in London and elsewhere. The dietary studies are of use to specialists, and I therefore give them. They are always difficult to obtain, and in this case they were secured by the bonus of half-a-crown a week given to twenty-one families over an average period of 6·33 weeks, to keep accounts, and hand in vouchers of their domestic expenditure. Each of these families averaged in the equivalent of men as laid down by the American expert, Attwood, 3·24 members. Their food from the nutritive point of view stood thus:—

Number of grammes of protein per man per day . 98·52  
(Standard 125.)

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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This average, as specialists will understand, is very high.

Total number of calories . . . . . 3,117·62  
(Standard 3,500.)

This, too, is high.

To the general reader it will be more interesting and intelligible to have details as to the way in which the earnings (in these investigated cases £1 4s. per week) were spent :—

	Per cent.
Food . . . . .	63·38
Rent . . . . .	14·51
Clothing . . . . .	4·12
Fuel and Light . . . . .	4·87
Clubs, societies, &c. . . . .	4·65
Sundries . . . . .	5·30
Pawn office and loans . . . . .	1·52

The balance is accounted for by balance income credit (4·82) and by balance of debt (3·17).

These statistics do not represent affluence, or even a decent standard of living, but they compare not unfavourably with those of typical poor districts in other cities of the world.

## CHAPTER III

### CROSS-CURRENTS

IN the first chapter attention was called to the phenomenon of cross-currents in Irish politics, as amongst the more remarkable of the changes presenting themselves to one who revisits Ireland after an interval of eighteen years. Formerly Ireland was divided into two parties, and two only. People were distinguished from one another, like the pieces on a chessboard. They were either black or white: the Kings, Queens, Rooks, Pawns, represented different values and powers, but the pieces were all of the same colour on one side and the other—there were no greyish whites or whitish blacks. Every man, woman, and child in the country was a thorough-going Nationalist, if they were not uncompromising Unionists. To-day that is not the case. Ireland is divided into Unionists, Nationalists, and Devolutionists, the last constituting the greyish-white element in the mosaic. Amongst the Unionists the cross-currents are—it would be

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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safe to say were—accidental, temporary, and largely personal, though for a time they threatened to disturb and divert the main stream. There had been dissatisfaction amongst Unionists with many details of the Irish policy of the late Administration. Some of the causes were trivial and parochial, others concerned some principles of real importance; but both causes and effects would probably have been forgotten had it not been for the appointment of Sir Antony MacDonnell to the post of Permanent Under-Secretary, and to the pursuit of a policy which was attributed, rightly or wrongly, to his masterful influence. The carrying of the Wyndham Land Purchase Act, 1903, kept the discontented quiet for a time. This measure of incalculable benefit to Ireland, as I shall show later, will be gratefully associated with the name of its author, Mr. Wyndham, when the passions and animosities since excited have spent their force. When, however, it was known, or believed—and in Ireland belief is quite as potent as knowledge—that Sir Antony MacDonnell was leading his chief on to the slippery slope of Devolution, a slope which ends inevitably in the precipice

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## Cross-Currents

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of Separation—practically the whole Unionist party in Ireland was alienated from the Unionist Administration. Here, perhaps, it is as well that I should set forth the impression made upon me by the attitude of the Irish Unionists towards the Under-Secretary. It would be folly to deny that they are bitterly hostile to the policy he is supposed to urge upon his chiefs and are deeply distrustful of the methods of Administration pursued under the present *régime*—a distrust which, as I shall show in dealing with the Agrarian question, is justified. Notwithstanding this, and the fact that Irishmen are more apt than others to identify politics and individuals, I heard but very rarely any personal reflections upon Sir Antony himself. His great abilities, his courage, his uprightness, and the integrity of his character and of his intentions, were freely admitted. One uncompromising opponent of his policy and system of Administration paid him the compliment of saying, “Sir Antony is the more dangerous because he is thoroughly honest.” This recognition is due to the Under-Secretary, and in all adverse criticisms of his policy and methods which will be found in this

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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book, this appreciative opinion of Sir Antony MacDonnell's character stands good without reservation.

It was unfortunate that, owing, no doubt, to his Indian experience, which is accountable for many of his known or alleged views, Sir Antony had forgotten, or had not learnt, the salutary truth, that Ireland is a "whispering gallery." In England even the most prominent politicians or Civil servants may speak their minds freely, and even talk at random, in mixed social gatherings, without fear that their words will be shouted from the housetops next day and inspire leading articles in journals of all hues the day after. In Ireland this is not the case. Sir Redvers Buller, during his brief occupation of the post now filled by Sir Antony, learnt this lesson when it was too late. The present Under-Secretary has not only suffered from the hardship of having his private utterances put in circulation, but he has gone out of his way to make speeches, of which it is enough to say that they were open to the construction and interpretation put upon them by hostile critics. It is a wholesome rule which prescribes that permanent members of the

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## Cross-Currents

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Civil Service should keep their eyes and ears open and their mouths shut. Sir Antony's views, as they were inferred from his duly-recorded speeches and from the private remarks attributed to him, were not unnaturally held by Unionists to represent, at least in general tendency, the actual opinions and the prospective policy of his titular chiefs. The consequence was open discontent and apprehension, accompanied by a semi-revolt or a sullen apathy. Mr. Walter Long's brief tenure of the office of Chief Secretary did wonders to arrest the current of disaffection, but it was by no means completely dammed at the time of the General Election. There was nothing like the zeal shown in Unionist Ulster that had been displayed in previous conflicts, and there was a good deal of ominous talk about "a second line of defence," or, in other words, of Ulster preparing to entrench in the north-east, and to leave the Loyalists in the rest of Ireland to shift for themselves. No policy could be more dangerous, for those who devote themselves entirely to fortifying a second line, very rarely fight sternly and successfully in the first. Happily, the disaster of a rupture

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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in the ranks of the Irish champions of the Union has been averted, and the credit is largely due to the indefatigable exertions of Mr. Long, and to the confidence he has inspired in all sorts and conditions of Unionists. Belfast, at least, is again solid for the cause, as was demonstrated at the late municipal elections, fought, as usual, on party lines, when Unionists swept all the seats which it was reasonably possible for them to win. It may be remarked, in passing, that "bigoted Protestant Belfast," as it is the fashion for Irish and English Radicals to describe the most prosperous city in Ireland, took the opportunity on the very morrow of their victory to nominate and unanimously to elect as High Sheriff—a post only second in dignity and importance to that of the Lord Mayor—a Catholic Nationalist. When will Dublin follow this example? Russellism is virtually dead in Ulster, and its eponymous hero will probably fail to be re-elected, even though he command the full strength of the Nationalist vote in his present constituency. There is every reason to believe that if any Home Rule Bill—or a measure leading up to Home Rule—be introduced, Ulster will rally

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## Cross-Currents

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as heartily and uncompromisingly to the defence of the Union as she did in 1886 and in 1895. The Unionist cross-currents are once more being absorbed in the main stream.

The Nationalist party is in a totally different condition. It would be altogether premature to anticipate that the "little rifts within the lute" will in the immediate future make the Home Rule "music mute." But the rifts are there, and they are "growing." The old Parliamentary party is no longer solid, as it was in the palmy days of Parnell, or even as it was when a conciliation was effected between the Parnellites and the M'Carthyites by the selection of Mr. J. E. Redmond as nominal leader. I use the adjective "nominal" advisedly. Mr. Redmond occupies the dignified position of Chief of the party in the House of Commons; the Government whips make their arrangements with the Nationalists through him; it is doubtless to him that the Chief Secretary goes for counsel and advice, and "deals" with the Radicals are endorsed by him. These distinctions, however, do not suffice to make a man a real leader, and no one in Ireland—to whatever section or sub-section he may belong—is

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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ignorant of the patent fact that Mr. John Dillon—the bitterest opponent “of English rule”—is the *de facto* leader of the Parliamentary party. But Mr. Dillon himself is not absolute, or even independent. Above him stands the *Freeman's Journal*, and the controller of the most widely-read and powerful Nationalist organ in Ireland is Mr. Sexton. Mr. Sexton, outside the House of Commons, is a more potent factor than he ever was within its walls, or than any single politician is in the whole of Ireland. A study of the *Freeman's* leading articles affords a useful education in Irish politics. It persistently damned Mr. Bryce with faint praise, and it is by no means extravagant in its eulogies of the Parliamentary party as a whole, or of many of its members.

The incidents of the last few months call attention to, but do not gauge the gravity of, the split inside the party itself. Mr. Tim Healy—intellectually the ablest of the Nationalists—was long ago ostracised, and with the irony which characterises Irish history even more than any other—Mr. W. O'Brien, the author of his expulsion, is now being subjected to the same treatment he meted out to Mr. Healy, who to-day is

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in more or less agreement with him. It is true that Mr. O'Brien has not yet been formally "struck off the rolls" by his colleagues, but they have excluded his lieutenants and sympathisers. It is, moreover, not less significant that this sentence for open war against the O'Brienites was not passed unanimously; three members of the Parliamentary party dissenting from the judgment. In Irish politics it does not require many dissentients to make "a cave," and fewer than those now in disagreement with Messrs. Dillon and Redmond have upset potato carts in Ireland before now. The "orthodox" majority affect to treat the "O'Brienites" with contempt and indifference. It is, however, clear that this haughty mien does not represent their real state of mind. If they were not afraid of the malcontents, why should every stereotyped resolution passed at general and branch meetings of the United Irish League contain bitter denunciations of Mr. O'Brien and all his works and passionate appeals for "party unity"? Why should Mr. Dillon and Mr. Redmond feel constrained to stump the country and to insist upon the disloyalty of their old colleagues? Everywhere I went in Ireland—and I visited every

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province—Nationalists would, of their own initiative, tell me that Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Healy “had no following,” and would then proceed to dilate upon the enormous harm these politicians were doing to the cause. So long, however, as the Parliamentary party can rely upon the support of the United Irish League—a rod which Mr. O'Brien made for his own back—the numerical strength of the Nationalist representatives will not be much affected, though their prestige in Ireland will suffer greatly from the dissensions.

There can be no doubt whatever that the policy of the United Irish League—so far as it concerns Irish relations with Great Britain—is one for complete Irish independence. It is quite unnecessary to labour the point. Let me briefly quote from recent speeches of the nominal and real leaders of the party which has the support of the United Irish League. Mr. Redmond, it is true, does not speak with the same tongue in the United States as he does in England—or at the present moment in Ireland—and it is difficult to say whether he is more accurately disclosing his real views when attempting to extract dollars from the pockets

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of Irish-Americans, or when seeking to throw dust in the eyes of British Radicals. Perhaps neither alternative is correct. But, at any rate, it is well for the English public to have examples of both styles. When last in America, less than three years ago, Mr. J. Redmond attended a great Convention of Irish-Americans in New York. The proceedings were reported in the *Freeman's Journal* of September 21, 1904. A resolution was passed to the effect that, "In supporting Home Rule for Ireland we abandon no principle of Irish nationhood, as laid down by the fathers of the Irish movement for independence, from Wolfe Tone and Emmet to John Mitchel, and from Mitchel to Charles J. Kickham and Charles Stewart Parnell." In reply the titular Irish leader said :—

"I don't think I ever heard a more magnificent declaration of Irish principles than that contained in the report of the Committee of Resolutions. That declaration put in the clearest way the meaning and essence of this movement. That it is the same old movement for which Hugh O'Neill and Owen Roe fought ; the same old movement for

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which Mitchel and Meagher suffered. . . . My views are moderate views, but if it were in my power to-morrow, by any honourable means, to absolutely emancipate Ireland I would do it, and feel it my duty to do it."

It will be noted that Mr. Redmond splits infinitives as well as parties and kingdoms. It may be urged, that this was said in America, for a specific purpose, two or three years ago. The plea is not very creditable, but let it pass. Mr. Redmond, however, spoke quite frankly to his own constituents in Waterford on the very eve of the last election, when he was reported by the *Freeman's Journal* of December 2, 1905, to have said, speaking of a settlement :—

" Let me say just this word ; when I speak of a settlement of this question let me, at any rate, be clearly understood. I do not mean a half-way house. I do not mean a qualified Indian Council. What I mean by a settlement of this question is an Irish Parliament and an Executive responsible to it."

The real leader, Mr. John Dillon, had expressed himself with equal candour a year earlier, when he said at Moville :—

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“ I say deliberately that I should never have dedicated my life as I have done to this great struggle if I did not see at the end of this great struggle the crowning and consummation of our work—a free and independent Ireland.”

And, to clinch the matter, Mr. Devlin, afterwards Secretary to the Directory of the United Irish League, assured the American-Irish, speaking, as he said, for the United Irish League, that their object was

“ To have a Parliament that will give our people all authority over the police and judiciary, and, when equipped with comparative freedom, this would be the time for those who think that we should destroy the last link that binds us to England to operate by whatever means they think best to achieve that great and desirable end.”

It would be work of sheer supererogation to insist in Ireland upon the determination of the United Irish League to be content with no concession short of absolute independence ; for no man of any party entertains the slightest illusion on the subject. In Great Britain I am

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afraid that the position is not yet completely understood. The Prime Minister is very proud of his consistency, and still more proud of having "found salvation" in the Irish question before Mr. Gladstone did so. How, I wonder, does he square these definite demands with his declaration made twenty years ago, only four months before Mr. Gladstone was associated with him in the successful quest for salvation :—

"When we come," he told the electors of Culross, in November, 1885, "to the question of giving them (the Irish) a separate Parliament and a separate Government, then he confessed he saw great difficulties, and he did not think it was likely to be consented to by any Government, either Whig or Tory, because it would not be consistent with the maintenance of the integrity of the Empire, and the duty to the Crown."

It is a long cry from that declaration to the historic pronouncement at Stirling on the eve of the last General Election :—

"If I were asked advice by an ardent Irish Nationalist, I should say my desire is

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to see the effective management of Irish affairs in the hands of a representative Irish authority. And, further, I say, that if I were the Irish Nationalist, I would take it in any way that I could get it. If an instalment of representative control is offered to Ireland, or any administrative improvement, I should advise the Nationalist to thankfully accept it, provided it were consistent with and led up to the larger policy ; but it must be consistent with and lead up to the larger policy."

Sir Henry shares with Mr. Redmond the tendency to split infinitives. However, it is manifest that there is no substantial difference between the views of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and those of the United Irish League.

When any of the Irish leaders address large meetings convened by the League, those whose duty it is to supply British papers with reports of the proceedings naturally and properly confine themselves to summaries of the principal speeches delivered. It is, from an educative point of view, unfortunate that the English reader is not informed of the character of the

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“addresses” from leaders of the League, intolerable in length and number, and identical in language, which are presented to the orator of the day before he is allowed to speak. These addresses manage to convey more frankly than the subsequent rhetoric the real views of the reported politicians.<sup>1</sup> I might cite enough cases to fill a chapter ; but, as there is a monotonous sameness about them all, one will suffice. At a very recent demonstration at Ballinasloe, in Connaught, convened to unveil a memorial to the late Matt Harris, a very advanced Nationalist, addresses were presented to Mr. John Dillon, the orator of the day, from all branches

<sup>1</sup> Mr. G. A. Birmingham, the brilliant author of *The Seething Pot*, gives the following amusing account of “resolutions” in his last admirable novel, *Benedict Kavanagh*.

“The passing of resolutions is fast becoming, instead of fox-hunting and horse-racing, the most popular kind of sport in provincial Ireland. . . . Resolutions have also an educative value. The student finds an interest in their natural history. There is, for instance, the circular or round robin resolution—a migrant appearing in various parts of the country almost simultaneously and passed by all Boards or Councils without question. It is brief but fierce. The place of its origin is not always known. It preys upon any public enemy—that is to say, upon any prominent Irishman who has opinions of his own on any subject and ventures to express them. There is also the local resolution, a more highly-coloured variety, and much longer,” etc.

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of the United Irish League in the counties of Roscommon, Sligo, and Leitrim. They occupied three or four columns of the *Freeman's Journal*, and one and all adjured Mr. Dillon, in language of covert menace, not to accept from the "so-called Liberal Government" any measure of self-government that fell short of complete Home Rule. Mr. Dillon temporised, and was diplomatic, and the English readers who had nothing but his words before them would never realise that he was talking to people who regarded "devolution" as a substitute for the existing system with undisguised repugnance and contempt. More recently still the Dublin Corporation, in which the League is dominant, gave a further object-lesson as to the loyalty and moderation of the League's policy. A letter had been received by the Town Clerk of Dublin from a body in Boston, U.S.A., styling itself the "County Dublin Association," from which the following is an extract :—

" We, also believing with our illustrious co-patriot Theobald Wolfe Tone that the source of all our country's misfortunes is to be found in the connection with England, do hereby

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endorse the action of Alderman Kelly, of the Dublin City Corporation, in cutting down the Union Jack of England which floated over the said Corporation's steam-vessel Shamrock, on Monday, September 24, 1906, while on the trip to the Pigeon House ; and we further desire to express our approval of the action of Alderman Kelly, Councillors Daly, J. T. O'Kelly, Vaughan, T. Rooney, J. J. Ryan, Kavanagh, and Parkinson in refusing to honour the toast of 'The King' at the luncheon which followed."

In itself this fussy impertinence on the part of a handful of Irish-Americans would claim no notice. The significant fact, however, is that by thirty-one votes to five a motion was carried to insert this rubbish on the minutes of the Corporation.

I return to an examination of the present and future strength of the United Irish League. It is to-day for political purposes supreme in Ireland, with the exception of Unionist Ulster, O'Brienite Cork and South Dublin, and it is omnipotent for all purposes in the west. Powerful as it is, there are not wanting indica-

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tions that circumstances may yet shear it of its strength. There are two sets of tendencies, of which one may be called natural and the other artificial, which are even now beginning to undermine its authority. To the former belong the awakening of a new spirit among the Irish people, making for emancipation of thought and conduct, which is admirably set forth in Sir Horace Plunkett's *Ireland in the New Century*, and pressed and enforced with remarkable energy in a book, *Economics for Irishmen*, by "Pat," a pseudonym which does not disguise the identity of Mr. P. D. Kenny, late editor of *The Irish Peasant* (subsequently *The Peasant*), whose paper was practically squelched by the personal intervention of Cardinal Logue. Of this book and its author I shall have a good deal to say by and by, and meantime I would recommend it to all who want to understand the "Irish problem." To this class of tendencies also belongs the partial disappearance of "agrarianism" brought about by the Wyndham Purchase Acts of 1903. Politics in Ireland mean one thing to politicians and quite another to the overwhelming majority of a

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people who, as regards four-fifths of them, are engaged in agriculture. To the politician politics mean constitutional reforms or revolutions ; to the tiller of the soil they mean "more land and cheaper land." Those who are purchasing or have purchased under the terms of Acts culminating with the comprehensive measure of 1903, may still vote "Home Rule," for the sake of a quiet life, but their interest in the work of the politicians is languid, and few of "the new landlords" contribute to the funds or attend the meetings of the United Irish League. Politically and financially this phenomenon is likely to prove embarrassing to an organisation which, like the daughters of the horse-leech, is always crying "Give, give."

What I have called the artificial check to the growth of the League is the rise and spread of other combinations, with different ideals and methods ; notably those of "Sinn Fein" (pronounced Shinn Fane), which interpreted means "Ourselves alone," and the parent stem from which it sprang as rather a freak, the Gaelic League. Though for several reasons, to which reference will be made hereafter, an increasing number of Roman Catholic priests are with-

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drawing from active politics, it cannot be denied that the priesthood is still the "predominant partner" in the management of the League. In proof of this we have only to look at the resolutions passed in County Councils, City Corporations, Urban Councils, District Councils, and even in Chambers of Commerce, at the dictation of the League, with regard to "the religious crisis" in France, which in no way concerns them. These resolutions, stereotyped, as is usual in Ireland, deserve the special attention of the followers of Dr. Clifford and their representatives in Parliament, who will be asked to vote for the policy of the United Irish League. They one and all express the sympathy of the council with the Roman Catholic "victims of an atheistical and tyrannical Government in France," and call for European movements in their support. The irony of it all is that the only people in Europe, apart from those who wished England ill, that really sympathised with the National movement in Ireland were the Republican majority in France, represented by "the tyrannical and atheistical Government" of to-day. A late mayor of Cork, not very renowned for learning, recently

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declared, in speaking in favour of one of these resolutions, that, for the first time in his life, he rejoiced that the French had not succeeded in landing at Bantry Bay a hundred years ago! The important point is that the lay members of these local bodies would never have dreamt of discussing French domestic politics had not the priests induced the United Irish League to take the question up.

Backing the priests is the Ancient Order of Hibernians, which has branches in the United States, Scotland, and the Colonies. Nominally, the A. O. H. is a benefit society, but in reality it is a secret society, having a pledge of secrecy, and its signs and passwords. It is a curious fact that, hostile as the Roman Catholic Church is to secret societies, the Irish branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians is largely controlled by "advanced" priests—though in Glasgow the same society is banned by the Church. Priests themselves are members, and are allowed to take the oaths and adopt the signs and passwords, with the saving clause that they must, if called upon, reveal them to their spiritual superiors under the seal of confession. The attitude of the A. O. H. is one

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of deadly hostility to England, and is purely Separatist. The corresponding Order in America has declared its intention of redoubling its efforts on behalf of the cause of Irish independence. It was from the Australian branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians that delegates from the United Irish League collected most of the subscriptions they secured during their late begging trip to the Antipodes. For the moment the Order works with the League.

Now let us examine the rivals to the United Irish League. The Gaelic League was started professedly upon non-political lines, and included many men distinguished in art and letters amongst its members. The avowed objects were of a nature which were entitled to respect and support. It was sought to awaken popular interest in Ireland in the Gaelic language, in old Irish customs and games, and to revive as far as was possible national arts and crafts, and to interest all classes of the community in the history of the country. So far as the movement was educational, and tended to encourage thought and emancipate the intellect, it was admirable. The priests fought shy of it, and

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still do, because they do not know how far the spirit of emancipation might carry the devout. But, as inevitably happens in Ireland, this non-political movement was soon captured by the politicians. On November 5, 1905, Dr. Hyde—a distinguished scholar but an intemperate politician—who is the present president of the League, addressed three thousand sympathetic Americans in Carnegie Hall, New York. This, *inter alia*, is what he told them:—

“I know that you will join us in saying that the devouring demon of Anglicisation in Ireland which, with its foul and glutinous jaws, has devoured, one after another, everything that was hereditary, national, instructive, ancient, intellectual, and noble in our race, our language, our music, our songs, our industries, our dances, and our pastimes—I know, I say, that you will plant your feet firmly, and say with us, ‘Back, Demon, back ! Not one other mouthful shall you swallow of the heritage of the nation.’ ”

In spite of a profound conviction that the acquisition of a second language—alien in structure and style from the vernacular—is one

of the best instruments of education, and does more than another to open the mind and discipline the understanding, I am bound to confess that there is a great deal of humbug about this revival of the Gaelic language. That its acquisition is of no practical use is no objection to it. The best education is generally financially useless ; though an Irish parent, when asked what was the good of having his child taught Gaelic, replied, "It will be of no use to him in Ireland, but it might help him if he went abroad !" The real objection to the movement is that it is in essence a political device, and in practice it encourages the teaching of the merest smattering of a language at the cost of the abandonment of more really educative instruction. In Leinster it is probable that very few have used Gaelic as a language for a hundred years, and it is certain that in Dublin no Gaelic has been spoken for three hundred years ; yet the League solemnly talks of thirty thousand Gaelic-speaking people in Leinster, and of "some thousands" in Dublin.<sup>1</sup>

With the Gaelic League is associated the

<sup>1</sup> The cost of teaching Gaelic rose from £955 in 1901 to £12,069 in 1904.

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Gaelic Athletic Association. Ostensibly its aim was to revive old Irish games and pastimes, and to exclude cricket, football, and other athletic sports imported from England. It makes no secret, however, of its real object. Not only are its members forbidden to play English games, but all soldiers, sailors and policemen are denied membership and the privilege of participating in its sports. Moreover, in recent years its members have been drilled in military fashion, carrying the "camans," or clubs, like rifles on their shoulders. Now that the Arms Act—which Mr. John Morley refused to drop in 1892–95—has been repealed, there is no reason why the rifle should not play its part in the drill—and elsewhere. Mr. Redmond claims that the right to carry arms is the badge of freedom; we shall see what use is made of this badge, not only in the Gaelic Athletic Association, but in Ulster.

Certainly the most interesting movement, and possibly not the least important for good and evil, is that known as Sinn Fein. The association comprises some of the keenest and brightest intellects in Ireland; its members are

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increasing all over the country, and its growing influence is proved by the fact that it captured some seats on the Dublin Corporation from the United Irish League at the last elections. Its programme is so astoundingly comprehensive and thoroughgoing that had the movement not had its birth in Ireland, one would have said off-hand that it was impossible. In Ireland nothing is impossible. Sinn Fein is the Ishmael of Irish politics. Its hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against it. Genealogically it is a product of the Gaelic League ; but the offshoot has very few of the characteristics of the parent stem. The common feature is the educationally laudable desire to stimulate and foster the intellectual capacities of the Irish people ; to revive interest in and love of Irish history, the old language, the arts, and dormant industries of Ireland, other than those connected with agriculture. Sinn Fein, however, differs from the Gaelic League in being avowedly political—in the national sense—and uncompromisingly anti-English. As one of its most brilliant adherents told me, the nominal goal of Sinn Fein was the resuscitation of Grattan's system ; the government of Ireland by King,

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Lords, and Commons in an Irish Parliament. But he added that the large majority of the members would be content with nothing short of an independent Republic. Indeed, it is difficult to see how the Sinn Fein programme could be carried out so long as the golden link of the Crown remains unbroken. One of its methods, for instance, is to stop recruiting for the Imperial Army.<sup>1</sup> So far this effort has not been successful to any large extent, but it is too early to speak definitely of its future prospects. At the first annual Convention of the National Council, held in the Rotunda, Dublin, on November 28, 1905, under the presidency of Mr. Edward Martyn (the founder), Mr. Arthur Griffith proposed, as the policy of the National Council :—

“National self-development through the recognition of the duties and rights of citizenship on the part of the individual, and by the aid and support of all movements originating from within Ireland instinct with national tradition, and not looking outside Ireland for the accomplishment of their aims.”

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B.

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This resolution was a direct blow at the Parliamentary party, for whose *personnel*, objects, and tactics Sinn Fein expresses unqualified contempt. As a member said to me, "We are sick of ceaseless chatter and political agitation." Sinn Fein, then, advocates the withdrawal of the Nationalist members from the Imperial Parliament, and the application of the funds raised to support them to the development of Irish industries, or to the appointment of Irish consuls in foreign countries, the boycotting of all English-manufactured goods, with the ulterior object of instituting a system of rigid protective tariffs, especially against England; the withdrawal of all litigation from courts of justice established and maintained by the "English" Parliament, the judges whereof have sworn allegiance to the "English" King. If it is asked how Ireland is going to live till this independence is secured, the answer is: There are in the United States to-day thirty Irishmen, or men of Irish blood, whose names on a cheque would be good for £50,000,000. Few of these men take any public part in affairs, but all of them profess a desire in public to help Ireland in the direction indicated—on

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business lines. So, with £50,000,000 provided by Irish-Americans, and a like sum lodged "in the so-called Irish banks," Ireland could start with a capital of £100,000,000, build up a mercantile marine, which, aided by an Irish consular service, would not only make the country commercially independent and prosperous, but would deal a severe blow at "England." And to "hurt England" is one of the undisguised objects of Sinn Fein, partly to pay off old scores against this country, and partly, after the manner of the Israelites versus the Egyptian Pharaoh, to compel England "to let Ireland go." Meanwhile, as an instalment, there is afoot a comparatively mild movement —based this time upon the Boston anti-tea policy—to punish England by reducing Irish consumption of all dutiable articles—ale and stout, whisky, tea, sugar, and tobacco—by one-half. It may be added that the Franciscans, who are making a determined and most successful effort to promote temperance in Ireland, do not hesitate to appeal to this national sentiment as an inducement to abstain from alcoholic beverages. When, however, it comes to tea, which Irishmen and Irishwomen are consuming

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in increasing quantities, and to tobacco, we shall be in a better position to judge of the hold of Sinn Fein on the minds of the people.

There is something pathetic in the fact that men of unquestioned intellectual capacity and intelligence can be found to believe in the success of so astounding and impossible a policy. It is the more astonishing because the leaders base the hopes of victory upon the precedents of "United Germany" and of "Independent Hungary." The names of Francis Deak and of Friedrich List are always on their tongues, while they forget the two essential and, from their point of view, fatal facts that Hungary has a population of nearly twenty million people, while Austria has not more than twenty-seven millions; and that the Germans, who, separated by artificial boundaries, were united by common aspirations, amounted to a dozen times the numbers of "Irish Irishmen." Behind Francis Deak stood a population half as large as that of the United Kingdom; and it required a persistent prosecution of the policy of "blood and iron" before German Unity was achieved.

Visionary and unreal as are the aims of Sinn Fein, they are attracting sufficient supporters

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to frighten the “orthodox” Nationalists, and the political priests, whom Sinn Fein ignores, rather than opposes. It is notable, however, that when the stereotyped vote of censure upon “the atheistical and tyrannical French Government”—referred to above—was moved in the Corporation of the City of Dublin, the newly-elected Sinn Fein members voted against it.

Mr. Stephen Gwynn, M.P., was told off to condemn the Sinn Fein policy at a meeting in Dublin. It was not difficult for so well-informed a man to demolish the historic bases of the “Ourselves alone” movement, but he had to admit that “the effect of the Sinn Fein party had been, to a certain extent, to weaken the Irish party.”

Mr. Gwynn gave a further proof of the apprehensions of his party with regard to Sinn Fein by going one better in respect of the anti-enlistment movement :—

“He would do his best,” he said, “to induce any Irishman not to go into the English Army, but, with an army like the British, it was a question of pay, and if they wanted soldiers they could get them. The men who

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joined the Army were not the pick of Ireland, and would be the least affected by a National appeal—the loafers in the street-corners. The people who joined the English Army did not do so for the honour and glory of the career—they were the thoughtless and vicious who joined."

To such miserable shifts is a gentleman and a scholar reduced when he is trying to outbid a rival faction.

I shall reserve what I have to say on the little cross-current raised by the Devolutionists till I have to deal with the whole question of Home Rule and its alternatives. It is sufficient to say now that it is composed of men from both parties, who have persuaded themselves that it is possible to convert an Alpine hut on a slippery slope amid the ice into a permanent residence.

Last of all of the cross-currents in Irish politics, and, for the moment only, the least effective, is one of which much will be heard and felt in a not distant future—I mean a Labour movement in which "Nationalist" ideas will play little part. At present it is a power in

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the towns, but it is also germinating in the agricultural districts. In the strenuous demand for the substitution of "direct labour" in road-mending for the existing system of contracts to farmers may be found the seeds of a new and serious agitation. At Castlerea lately, in the course of a riotous demonstration in favour of "Direct Labour," the cry was raised, "Enough has been done for the tenants; it is our turn now!"

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TYRANNY OF THE U. I. L.

If it were necessary to summarise the condition of Ireland from the point of view of law and order, it would be sufficient to say that law and order are respected in two-thirds of Ireland, and that in the remaining third law is maintained, but it is the law of the United Irish League, and not the King's law, and order prevails, but it is order of somewhat the same kind as that which once reigned in Warsaw. The third of Ireland which is dominated by the League is that portion of the island known as the west. Mr. Bryce, in the course of his valedictory pilgrimage, has recently declared, with sublime self-complacence, that he was leaving Ireland peaceful and happy. To one who, like myself, read a summary of his speeches while touring in the west, the statement only proved that Mr. Bryce knew as little of Ireland as Ireland knew of its late Chief Secretary. Even Englishmen must have been

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amazed, though loyal Irishmen were appalled, at the light-hearted way in which he reproached the Press for exaggerated reports of the assault made upon Mr. Townsend, a land agent, while in the discharge of his duty at Thurles. The official version of this outrage stated that Mr. Townsend was on his way to attend an eviction for non-payment of rent in the execution of his obvious duty. There seemed to have been some misunderstanding as to the attendance of the police, and Mr. Townsend was unescorted. A mob fell upon him, knocked him down, stunned him, and kicked him while he was insensible. He was rescued and confined to the house for some days, and was then able to resume his duty. As it was rarely that I was able to see English papers while on the move in Ireland, I do not know where the exaggeration came in. The bald facts, however, are sufficiently discreditable, and the impression created—in Ireland, at any rate—by Mr. Bryce's speech was that so long as a man was not killed or permanently injured, a little knocking about by a mob was a matter of no importance. It was not a good lesson to teach the police, who are very sensitive to

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## The Tyranny of the U. I. L.

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the utterances of their actual or late superiors. What view would have been taken of a similar assault committed upon the Chief Secretary by a band of rowdy Orangemen as he was on his way to the castle to discharge his duty?

But, really, it is hard to understand from what source Mr. Bryce drew his information. He boasted in the middle of January that the Irish Government had been enabled to dispense with the odious system of "jury-packing," as he called it. Jury-packing only means the prerogative of the Crown to challenge jurors who are likely to find verdicts not in accordance with the evidence, but under the influence of fear or prejudice. Soon after Mr. Bryce had thus exalted himself over his tyrannical predecessors a copy was put into my hands of the *Sinn Fein* of December 22, 1906. In reply to a boast similar to that uttered by Mr. Bryce, on the part of the *Cork Examiner*, that it "may be said that in the Munster Winter Assizes the law has been adequately vindicated without recourse to coercion or jury-packing, or other methods which brought disgrace on the administration of the law in the past of this part of the country," *Sinn*

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*Fein*, after enumerating the challenges by the Crown, goes on to say :—

It is a goodly list of stand-bys at one assizes, and in a time when jury-packing has ceased to exist.

We analyse it to convince the *Cork Examiner* that jury-packing and the jury-packers were never more fully alive, and that Mr. R. R. Cherry, K.C., M.P., and his indefatigable assistant, Mr. Dunne, can stand in the same row with Peter the Packer himself.

Case 1.—King of England *v.* Meany.

Challenged for prisoner . . . . .	20
Ordered to "stand by" by Crown . . . . .	45

Case 2.—King of England *v.* Ward and Casey.

Challenged for prisoners . . . . .	20
Ordered to "stand by" by Crown . . . . .	21
These men were being tried for their lives.	

Case 3.—King of England *v.* O'Leary and others.

Challenged for prisoners . . . . .	6
Ordered to "stand by" by Crown . . . . .	15

Case 4.—King of England *v.* Healy and others.

Challenged for prisoners . . . . .	6
Ordered to "stand by" by Crown . . . . .	16

In each case the prisoners exhausted their right of challenge. The Crown went on with

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its inexhaustible stand-by after the unfortunate men in the dock had been silenced, until it had eliminated, so far as the panel permitted, every man from the jury-box who might be about its influence. In the cases we have quoted—the only agrarian and semi-political cases at the Commission — the Liberal Government, without showing cause, ordered ninety-seven Irishmen away from the jury-box, whilst it refused to allow the prisoners to order away more than fifty-two. The *Cork Examiner*, whilst publishing these facts in its news columns assured the people in its editorial ones that jury-packing had ceased.

As the result of a tour through the west, in the course of which I was able, under the strictest seal of confidence, to converse with all sorts and conditions of people, rich and poor, official and private, priests and ministers, boycotters and boycotted, Nationalist and Unionist, I am convinced that the machinery for the prosecution of terrorism and intimidation is better organised and more complete than it was in the worst days of the Land League, and that the little finger of the United Irish League is

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thicker than its predecessor's loins. It is quite true that there are very few acts of physical violence, and very few crimes of the class of arson and mutilation of cattle. But there are two explanations of this superficial tranquillity. In the first place, the order has gone forth, iterated and reiterated in the speeches of the Parliamentary leaders, that no outrages are to occur, lest a weapon be put into the hands of the Unionist opposition. In the second place, outrages are superfluous. So rigid and irresistible is the rule of the League that the issue of a bull against an individual usually suffices to bring him to order. There is a familiar story of a Prime Minister on his death-bed, who, after making the usual public confession of his sins, was asked by the priest, "Have you forgiven your enemies?" "Father," was the reply, "I have no enemies." "What!" was the further question, "a man in your position has no enemies?" "No, Father," was the answer, "I have killed them all."

The United Irish League has not killed its enemies, it has cowed them into abject and almost universal submission. It is not, therefore, surprising that only a very few cases of

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violence and overt intimidation are brought to the official knowledge of the police. But those which do occur throw a terrible light upon the condition of the west, as I shall proceed to show, by evidence which has become public. I could quote case after case which has come under my own observation, of the authenticity of which there can be no question, but for the fact that if I indicated even remotely the sources from which I obtain my information the last state of those victims of League oppression would be worse, if that is possible, than the first.

The *modus operandi* is simplicity itself. In most parts of the west, especially in Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, and East Galway, practically every village has a branch of the United Irish League, which holds periodical meetings. When any one incurs the displeasure of the League he is summoned to attend their next meeting to give an explanation. Should he comply, his case is investigated, he is called on to apologise and promise to amend his ways ; and thereupon he is either pardoned, cautioned, or punished for his alleged delinquencies. Should he disregard the summons, he is then

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a marked man, and the case is put into the hands of a Vigilance Committee, who see that a thorough boycott is carried out throughout the county. They communicate with all the other branches. The man's farm is at once picketed, and in most cases this continues both by night and day. Neither the boycotted man nor any of his family can leave the farm without horns being blown by the watchers, who thereby let the countryside know that the wretched people are on the road. This is passed on the whole way they go, and they are also escorted by members of the League, who follow behind blowing horns at them and indulging in every kind of abusive and menacing language. Should the boycotted man try and obtain food or necessities at any villages the shopkeepers are at once warned that they must not supply him with any, a warning which is seldom disregarded. No man is allowed to talk to a boycotted man, to work for him, buy from him or sell to him anything whatever. According to the League papers, as I will presently show, the League has no hesitation in naming men publicly as being obnoxious to them, and the language used is often of a most inflammatory description. As

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the result of all this, many families would now be starving were it not that Loyalist county gentlemen who are beyond the reach of the League supply them with food and other necessities of life. In many cases these provisions are given directly; when, however, they are sent in, as is often necessary—owing to the timidity of local tradesmen—from outside towns, they have to be addressed to the recipient at the nearest railway station, without any label or mark on them to show who their consignor was. To-day the League has so completely organised its machinery that a dab of green paint upon a man's door or upon his cattle or pigs or sheep is sufficient to insure that he himself is shunned as a leper, and that his stock is unsaleable. Many markets in the west show a diminished attendance of farmers because the more timid are afraid of inadvertently speaking to or dealing with men who have come under the ban of the League.

I will take, as an illustration, a case or two in Leitrim which are public property. First, there is the Brady case, which has acquired a certain notoriety because of the attempt to attach Mr. Walter Long for contempt of Court

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on the ground of a speech in which reference was made to it. Summarised it may be told as follows :—

Thomas Brady has acted as bailiff on the estate of Miss Crofton for several years. He occupied a good farm at Drumnafinla, where his wife and two sons live with him. This farm was never an evicted one, and has been for many years in Brady's family. He is at the present time rigidly boycotted, and can only live under the constant protection of the police. Three constables are quartered in his house since last August, two of whom accompany him wherever he goes. He dare not attend worship at the Roman Catholic church. If he did the rest of the congregation would make a hostile display against him. Even the priest will not speak to him. The facts leading up to his unpopularity are as follows : On May 22, 1888, one James Creamer was evicted from a farm on the Slack estate, adjoining that of Miss Crofton. This man owed arrears amounting to £106, and a yearly rent of £15 10s. Adjoining this farm was another, from which a tenant had previously been evicted. After Creamer's eviction

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these two farms were amalgamated, and one John Kelly was put in as caretaker. On Dec. 7, 1889, Kelly was murdered on the public road, within half-a-mile of his house. After the murder Thomas Brady became caretaker of this farm, under strong police protection. The farm he held in Drumnafinla was left in charge of his wife and family. In May 1894, Edward Brady, son of Thomas, was made tenant of this joint holding, and Thomas returned to his own farm at Drumnafinla. In May 1899, Edward bought his farm from the Irish Land Committee ; he fell into arrears, however, and the holding was put up for auction at Carrick-on-Shannon in February 1906. Thomas Brady paid up all arrears and costs, and the sale was stopped. This deprived some relatives of the old tenants of the chance of buying the holding at a nominal sum, as no one would dare to bid against them. Since this took place Brady goes in imminent danger of his life. He lives only by the protection of the police. He can get no provisions in any neighbouring villages, and has to travel long distances with the police to get the necessities of life.

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Wherever he is seen crowds assemble and "boo" and groan at him. Some evictions took place on the Crofton estate in May last, and serious rioting occurred. On July 7 last two of Brady's sons were returning from Dromahair with meal and flour on an asses' cart. This is about twenty miles from Brady's farm. They were attacked by a mob, which scattered the provisions, and the Bradys were with difficulty saved by a force of twelve police. I append to this story the following extracts from issues of the *Sligo Champion* connected with the boycotting of Brady, under the heading "United Irish League," premising that the names in parentheses do not appear in the text.

*June 30.—Drumshambo Branch.* Proposed and passed unanimously : "That we call on the shopkeepers of this town not to supply goods to any person who is known to be a grabber, or their supporters, and that, if we do know of any person violating the rules, we will publish their names in future."

*July 14.—Drumkeerin Branch.* A vigilance committee was appointed to keep an eye on people dealing or keeping company with obnoxious individuals, and to report all

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cases coming under their notice at our meetings.

*July 28.—Ballinagleera Branch.* As the public are aware, the tyranny enacted on the Crofton estate is indescribable, owing to the existence of a bailiff, who is at present caretaking three evicted farms on the estate, as well as having in his possession the farm in Greaghna farna, from which three poor tenants were evicted under tyrannical circumstances.

*September 1.—Ballinagleera Branch.* Extract from motion proposed by Mr. A. Mulvey, hon. secretary of the Ballinagleera Branch of the United Irish League, and seconded by Mr. Daniel Flynn, J.P.:

“That we, the Nationalists of Ballinagleera, in public meeting assembled, condemn the action of certain shopkeepers in Carrick-on-Shannon and Croghan in supplying the notorious bailiff (Brady) with goods while he was declined same in the towns of this district, and we hereby warn those who supply him in future that they should remember that they will have the Nationalists of Leitrim and Roscommon to deal with.”

*September 8.—Drumkeerin Branch.* We have been informed that the emergency man (Brady) was supplied with provisions last week by a Dromahair shopkeeper (Mr. Longmoor), who has taken a prominent part in the cattle show. We hope it shall not escape the attention of the Dromahair Branch.

*November 10.—Ballinagleera Branch.* It was submitted that the grabbers, Brady and Cullen, were receiving some supplies from a merchant in Enniskillen, and it was decided to take action in the matter.

More than three weeks after I had written on this case in the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, the following paragraphs appeared on two successive days, March 4 and 5, in the *Times* :—

*March 4.—*In opening the Leitrim Assizes today at Carrick-on-Shannon, Mr. Justice Kenny said that the official reports of the state of the country showed an increase in the number of what were called specially reported cases. He would scarcely think it necessary to comment on this increase but for the fact that it represented that very odious form of crime of intimidating threatening letters and notices. The county inspector had informed him that a

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certain district in that country was in a very lawless condition, and that three families, represented by twelve people, were wholly boycotted and under police protection, while other families received partial police protection. "He also told me," added his lordship, "that one family exists in such a state of continual danger that there are three policemen quartered in their house. I am also informed that to such an extent has the spirit of lawlessness developed that in one of the districts to which I have referred the postmen have twice been set upon and letters forcibly taken from them. In these latter cases, I regret to say, no one has been made amenable. Such a state of things justifies the observation made by the learned Judge who presided at last Connaught Winter Assizes, who said that when the chain of terrorism was complete no witness would give evidence and no jury would convict. I wish I could say your country was in a satisfactory condition and that I could offer you my congratulations, but the reports which I have received prevent me from being able to do so."

*March 5.—At the Leitrim Assizes, to-day, before Mr. Justice Kenny, the following eight persons were tried on charges of having been*

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concerned in an illegal assembly at Drumkeerin on July 7, 1906 : Thomas Gilrane, Peter Dolan, James Early, Francis McPartland, John Clancy, Patrick Ryan, Myles McPartland, and Joseph J. Flynn, district councillor. This is the second trial of the case ; the former trial, before Mr. Justice Gibson, at the Connaught Winter Assizes, resulted in a disagreement of the jury.

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Mr. Justice Kenny, in charging the jury, said that when he heard the evidence as to the treatment of these lads, he asked himself, as probably many others did, were they living in a Christian country and in a civilised community ? If the jurors sympathised with conduct such as had been described they were not fit to be jurors ; they were not fit to fill the most menial position that any one could conceive. It was as pitiable and as wretched a case as he had ever tried, and it was a case in which, if justice were not meted out, there would be a reflection on their country.

The jury, after an absence of an hour and a half, stated they could not agree. Mr. Justice Kenny asked them to decide whether the prisoners were members of the crowd. The

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jury answered "Yes." Mr. Justice Kenny asked whether they were there for the purpose of interfering with the Bradys. The jury said they could not agree, and they were discharged, and the prisoners were allowed out until the July assizes.

I will cite one other instance, with the comments of the *Sligo Champion* :—

Edward Boles is one of the most rigorously boycotted men in the district, and he and his family are given no peace. The letter which follows, mentioned in the *Sligo Champion* of Oct. 13, was referred to by Mr. P. A. McHugh at the League demonstration held at Drumkeerin the following week, when the advice given was to pay no attention to the letter, but to persecute Boles. During the course of one of the speeches it was also advocated "that a ring of fire should be drawn round Edward Boles and Jeffrey Cullen, and they should get plenty of the horn." On one Sunday in November Mrs. Boles was hooted and had horns blown round her when returning from church to Drumkeerin in company with a Mrs. Nixon, wife of the postmaster at Drumkeerin. Boles

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used to get all his supplies from this Mr. Nixon, but now gets them from towns in other counties, except portable articles, which Mr. Nixon still gets for him. As in all the cases, the police have to escort the cart when getting supplies. Special attention should be drawn to the extract of Sept. 29, which shows how the boycotted people are intimidated. When the question was asked in the House of Commons some time ago, as to whether it was true that Boles had to get supplies from the postmaster at Dromahair, Mr. Bryce's reply was that it was not so. This was a mere splitting of straws, as it was the postmaster at Drumkeerin and not at Dromahair. The extracts are from the *Sligo Champion*.

*September 22.—Drumkeerin Branch.* As all Nationalists now know their duty towards the grabbers, we need hardly remind them that Boles, the grabber of Mr. Porteous' farm, should be treated the same as Jeffrey or any other grabber.

*September 29.—Drumkeerin Branch.* John Woods apologised for working with the grabber, Boles, and his apology was accepted. . . .

It was then decided to have some musical

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recreation, and the band started in the direction of Mr. Porteous' evicted farm. Horns were blown, and in a very short time several hundred people assembled about a mile from the village, in full view of the home of the evicted tenant.

With horns blowing and groans for the grabber, the people returned.

*October 13.—Drumkeerin Branch.* It has been reported to the committee that Lloyd Miller and others assisted grabber Boles at making a hayrick during the night. Due inquiry shall be made. A letter had been left before the committee from Boles, deplored the wrong that is being done to him in calling him the grabber of the Porteous' farm, declaring his mother to be the grabber and that he is only acting the part of an obedient son in assisting his "aged mother" in her grab. If it is any consolation to Boles, we shall call him the assistant grabber; meanwhile, we may have a word to say to the grabber, his "aged mother," who, we are told, resides at Boyle.

*November 10.—Drumkeerin Branch.* It has been reported to the committee that the Post Office authorities of the town are supplying

goods to the grabber (Boles) and his assistant (Lloyd Miller). We direct the vigilance committee to make inquiries and report at our next meeting, when the case shall be further dealt with.

An even more recent instance of the power of the League was supplied by a case which became public in Ballinasloe. I quote it particularly because it had no connection with evicted holdings, but followed closely on the lines of the story of Naboth's vineyard. Mr. Beirne, of Ballinasloe, a Nationalist and a Roman Catholic, who, by his exertions, had saved a considerable sum of money, bought a grass farm in Roscommon, for which he paid £1,200. This land had been sold under the Ashbourne Acts. It was coveted by his neighbours for the purpose of breaking up and distribution amongst those who wanted more land. He held out for some time, but his windows were broken, his cattle driven off, and he was threatened with the usual penalties of League law. On the occasion of Mr. Dillon's visit to Ballinasloe to unveil the memorial to Matt Harris, Mr. Beirne was led up in triumph

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to declare with manifest reluctance that he had surrendered the farm, and as far as I could learn had received no compensation or promise of compensation.

This is only one case amongst many which I came across in the west of men, and ladies, too, being boycotted because they refused to give up grass land which they had bought under the various Land Purchase Acts, or even had obtained by direct inheritance. People holding demesnes which have never been let, except occasionally, under eleven months' agreement, are now threatened, molested, and refused the right of selling their cattle, because this grass land is "required" by adjoining tenants.

It is not necessary to multiply cases, though I could do so almost *ad infinitum*. Some of the apologists for these overt acts of oppression will tell you that these are exceptional cases, and are not the outcome of any widespread agitation. The answer to this plea is simple and conclusive. Wherever a man is boycotted by the orders of the United Irish League, the whole county, and often the adjoining counties, at once co-operate with the branch of the

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League in isolating the man from communion with his fellows. There is not on record a single instance of a protest being made against the verdict of the League, and very few of secret assistance to the victim by members of his own class of life. The commonest expression which I heard in Connaught from sympathisers and their opponents was "the law of the League is the law of the land." And it is true.

In the course of my journey I motored through a great part of the Clanricarde property. The unpopularity of the landlord, which has received a considerable stimulus from severe expressions used by the present Prime Minister, and by the Chief Secretary, makes the Clanricarde property a favourite hunting-ground of the Irish agitators and Members of Parliament. Now it is not my business to defend Lord Clanricarde. Let us see, however, what are the worst charges, true or imaginary, that can be brought against him. He is said to be a miser ; it is true that he never visits his property, and that he spends in Ireland itself little or none of the income which he derives from his Irish estates. In other words, he ignores those moral obligations which are recognised and

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acted upon by most landlords in Ireland, and in the rest of the United Kingdom. But these offences, even if true, are not indictable ; they affect his relations with God and his conscience, but have not anything to do with the State or his rights as an owner of property. That he is not a rapacious or extortionate landlord is very simply proved. A great part of his estates consists of poor land, but the rents are exceptionally low, and have certainly not been raised in modern times. The demonstration of this truth is easy. Lord Clanricarde's tenants, hostile as they are to their landlord, have never taken him into the Land Court to obtain a reduction of their rents, and, as Lord Clanricarde disapproves of all recent agrarian legislation, he has pursued the same policy towards his tenants. Some time ago, however, there arose a dispute about sporting rights, and Lord Clanricarde took a few typical cases into the Law Court, with the result not only that his rights were recognised, but that the rents of these farms were raised by a body which cannot be charged with showing extravagant favour to good landlords, to say nothing about bad ones. Yet Lord Clanricarde is held up not merely by Nationalist members,

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but by prominent Ministers, to execration, as the dreadful example of Irish landlordism. As a matter of fact, Lord Clanricarde, whatever may be his other shortcomings, has only done voluntarily what the State has compelled other landlords to do by statute, namely, he has chosen to be the mere mortgagee of his own property, while various Acts of Parliament have forced this position on nearly all the landlords of Ireland.

In connection with this system of League tyranny, a word must be said with regard to the Royal Irish Constabulary. The least observant visitor to Ireland must have realised that the Royal Irish Constabulary, recruited from the ranks of the small farmers and tradesmen, and officered by the best men Ireland and Great Britain can produce, constitutes the finest gendarmerie that the world has ever seen. If you want to know anything in Ireland, from a "marching route" to the nature of the soil or the price of a pig, the best plan is "to ask a policeman." Absolutely incorruptible—they will not accept a tip for any service, however valuable—and loyal to the back-bone, they are the mainspring of the maintenance of law and

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order throughout the land. Fearless, considerate, and indefatigable, they manage to enforce the law without alienating the goodwill of the people. They are, however, human beings and Irishmen. As Irishmen they are keen politicians, though they keep their political opinions to themselves. In every police barracks in Ireland the *Freeman's Journal* is taken in and read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested. No amount of obloquy in its columns and no blandishments ever affect the devotion to duty of this incomparable corps. They see, however, as far into a millstone as others, and if they gather that their chiefs disapprove of zeal and alertness, they can be as slack as "the Castle" desires. When it is understood that the authorities have no wish for any information beyond a bald statement of "incidents," the constabulary content themselves with a report of such cases only as demand prosecution or require "police protection." They who know the feelings and passions of the countryside better than any of the inhabitants individually refrain from supplying information which is not asked for, and the communication of which, moreover, would be received with a snub rather

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than with appreciation and approval. An optimist and self-deluding Castle means a reticent and reserved constabulary. They will report truthfully what has happened ; they will refrain from conjecturing what they believe will happen. This frame of mind, for which the authorities and not the officers and men of the Royal Irish Constabulary are responsible, is fraught with positive danger in critical times such as are likely to recur. The machinery of organised lawlessness and violence is in working order, and only requires a lever to be pulled, or a button to be pressed, to be set in motion. Yet the trained experts who are watching the machine and the machinists are discouraged from making confidential reports. That is perhaps the most dangerous factor in the present condition of Ireland.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PRIEST AND POLITICS

AS occasional references have been made in the previous chapters to the action of Roman Catholic priests, not altogether of an appreciative character, and as I propose to devote this chapter mainly to the influence of the priests on Irish politics, it is well that I should start by defining my position towards them. I hope it is unnecessary to state that my criticism is conceived in no spirit of bigotry. Those who study contemporary history as politicians have to consider every factor in the political problem. Religion is always and everywhere a most important element in national life, and nowhere is it more predominant than in Ireland. But to examine the merits or demerits of any particular form of religion as such is not part of the student's task. It is not with Roman Catholicism as a creed that I have to deal, but with Irish Roman Catholic priests and their relations to the question of the day.

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Of course it must be borne in mind that the tenets of the Church of Rome, especially its insistence on the observance of holy days, necessarily handicap a Catholic population working side by side with Protestants who enforce abstinence from work only on Sundays and two or three special days in the year. Outside Dublin and Belfast small and promising industries have been hampered by the restriction of working days. In Belfast, however, where competition for employment is keen, the difficulty practically does not exist. With this insignificant exception, I shall have nothing to say about the Roman Catholic creed. It must be acknowledged that, on the whole, the Roman Catholics of the rest of Ireland are more tolerant than the Protestants of the north-east, though as I have pointed out in a previous article, Belfast has set an excellent example by the voluntary selection of a Roman Catholic Nationalist to occupy the second highest municipal office in the city. And amongst intelligent and broad-minded Protestants I found a feeling to exist, with which I heartily concur, that if the emancipation of the people from the control of the priests in temporal

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matters could only be purchased by the destruction of the spiritual influence of the priest, it would be better for Ireland and for the Irish that the present system, with all its mischievous accompaniments, should continue. The attempt by zealous Protestant missionaries, once so popular in this country, to convert Irish Catholics from what were called "the errors of Rome" long since proved a failure, and is now practically abandoned. If it were conceivable that a crusade of proselytism could succeed, as it could not, it is quite certain that the result would be, not the conversion of the Irish to Protestantism, but their relapse into a state of heathendom and moral degradation too terrible to contemplate. At the same time, the continued, though gradually diminishing, authority of the priest in matters secular is a misfortune for Ireland.

When we talk in England of undue clerical influence the utmost that we mean is that in the Church and in the school the Anglican priest or the Nonconformist minister abuses in spiritual questions the authority given him by his sacred calling. But in Ireland the priest, if he chooses, as a large majority of

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them still choose, to exert his spiritual authority to control the political, domestic, and economic affairs of his parishioners, can direct the whole destinies of his parish. In many parts of the country the priest is the match-maker, the arbitrator, the authority which decides whether a man shall buy or sell a farm, the price he shall pay for it, the market at which he shall deal, the manner in which he shall invest his savings, or, in a word, the whole business of his life. To some no doubt it would appear that the ideal person to act as guide, philosopher, and friend to a countryside is the parish priest, and few would demur to this if the guide were less blind than those to whom he dictates the way ; if the philosopher were better trained in secular matters than his pupils ; if the friend had power only to give advice, but not to enforce its acceptance by spiritual pains and penalties. And the misfortune in Ireland is that in the business of this world the training of the priest renders him less capable of giving wise counsel than those on whom he presses it. This truth is one of the strongest points insisted upon in *Economics for Irishmen*, by Mr. P. D. Kenny ("Pat").

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"Our phenomenon," he writes, "of a rich country, inhabited by a poor and diminishing people, with ample expenditure on education, and at London's door, presents one of the most interesting economic problems in the civilised world and demands the sincerest attention of every one who pretends to be an Irishman; more especially of any one pretending to be an Irish Catholic, if only because of the widely-accepted belief that Irish Catholicism is the cause of her decay; and this is scarcely more urgent than the further question of our Catholic majority remaining in almost uniform ignorance of everything economic. Besides, the Catholics are the fugitives. In face of such facts, and in view of the widespread belief before mentioned, every Catholic priest in Ireland ought to be an economist, yet I am assured on authority that no economics whatever is included in the ordinary curriculum at Maynooth. It looks as if the very existence of our Catholicism had become a matter of indifference to those specially charged with its maintenance and propagation."

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The evil, therefore, is not that the priests are advisers, but that by their training, or want of it, they are indifferent, or even bad, advisers. If Ireland is to profit by the opportunities now at her command, we shall have to parody the Platonic dictum and declare that Ireland will not be happy until priests are economists or economists are priests. As "Pat" well puts it :—

Were our priests but competent economists the result would be of more value to Ireland than any number of free Parliaments, because economic considerations go to the very bottom of national life, while all things Parliamentary are comparatively superficial. The Irish people spend their time *talking* about the things on the surface instead of *thinking* about the things at the bottom, or acting on them.

(The italics are "Pat's.")

The average Irish priest springs from the ranks, is educated in a seminary until he is sixteen or seventeen years of age, and then passes to the semi-monastic institution at Maynooth, where, associated only with men called to the

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same profession, he spends seven years, of which the last four are devoted exclusively to theology and spiritual preparation for the priesthood. Things are better than they were, and prospective priests have from two to three years' education in what are called "the humanities," and they are encouraged by most of the bishops to obtain a degree. But it must be remembered that such works as those of Bentham, Mill, and Herbert Spencer are on the Index Expurgatorius, and are not within the reach of candidates for ordination. I defer dealing with possible remedies for this evil till I come to the question of education. For the moment I am concerned with the Irish priest as he is and as he affects the political problem. Let me quote again from "Pat," himself a professing Catholic, who was suppressed, together with his paper, by the action of Cardinal Logue, for preaching "deference to the priest in things spiritual, independence in things temporal."

Unlike any other kind of Christian, the Catholic concedes to the priest all right of judgment with authority in religion. That is the most exalting concession that one man

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can ever make to another, and one also representing a profound principle in Christian ethics. In accordance with this principle the peasant may rise to the highest place in the highest temple, and the world has hardly a more beautiful example of Faith than the grey patrician of fifty generations bowed for the blessing of the new-made curate who may have started from the stable. But when that curate has "got his parish," expands his exclusive judgment on religion into his exclusive judgment on everything else, lays down the law on all things for patrician and plebeian together, dictates his "policy" to the statesman, his fees to the doctor, his voting to the citizen, their "opinions" to the public, and so turns his sacred privilege into a secular weapon; then the highest things we know of are dragged in the dirt, and character, economic and otherwise, is sunk under a confusion of standards that tend to make the individual a machine rather than a man, with Heaven itself pressed into the process of human demoralisation. That is what we have to-day in Ireland, at least in a measure large enough to assure our economic

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decay, and so helpless is the “nation” against it, that useful men, good Catholics, can have their dismissal dictated by the priest, and be driven out of Ireland for nothing more than uttering their opinions on lay matters peculiarly their own, admittedly in accordance with the liberty defined to them by their Faith. There cannot be much of a nation where this can happen, even in a single case, and I have not found one country parish yet in Ireland without records of the kind. For the few cases that get into print there are a hundred silenced by the organised terror ; the better class of priests, the young men with souls for their true work and with hearts for their country, are as much victims as the laity. In such conditions how can the Catholic community in Ireland develop the liberty that produces character or the character that produces progress ? We cannot hope for progress where moral cowardice is crowned by “religion.”

How can it be otherwise ? When the lad destined to be a priest is taken from the humble cottage in the country, he is naturally saturated

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with the prejudices and the hopelessly ineconomic views of his class. The modicum of humane instruction which he receives in the earlier days at Maynooth may broaden his intellect and open his mind, but it does little or nothing to teach him those elementary economic laws of which Ireland as a whole is lamentably ignorant. He leaves Maynooth clothed with enormous spiritual powers, which he can apply—too often does apply—in dealing with the secular affairs of his parish in after-life. If, as is generally the case, he discharges his priestly duties with zeal and diligence, he has very little time for reading or study outside of the field of theology. The old agrarian theories of his parents still remain, and are not tempered by practical experience such as is gained by his lay brethren. How, then, is it possible that he can be a better judge than his parents or his brothers of the price that should be paid for a horse or a cow, of the rental value of the soil, of the innumerable scientific discoveries now utilised for the benefit of agriculture, or of the wisdom of purchasing or not purchasing under the Wyndham Act?

The natural consequence is that the Irish priest looks at the economic problems of his

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parishioner from the point of view of the prejudiced peasant, and decides on them with all the authority of the Vatican. It is no reflection upon his character that he should take largely into consideration the effect of any economic changes or reforms upon the financial interests of himself and his church. There are cases, though they are comparatively few, in which the priest employs his special privileges to secure riches for himself, but there are still fewer cases of priests who do not think it their bounden duty to strengthen the financial position of their church. The migration or the emigration of parishioners means perhaps prosperity to them, but a diminution in the form of fees and dues of the church exchequer. The money spent on buying a holding may in the mind of a priest be calculated to reduce the purchasing tenant's means of contributing to the church. The disappearance of a Catholic landlord, in consequence of the sale of his property, may also involve substantial pecuniary loss. These and a host of other considerations discount the advice of the priest in temporal matters. In the unpolitical sense of the term he is naturally rigidly conservative; he deprecates

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in most cases the employment of new-fangled methods of agriculture unknown to his fathers, and he is necessarily an obstacle to industrial progress.

Were the priest to spend the time he can spare from the discharge of his religious duties in the study of social and economic problems, and in inculcating them in the minds of his flock, he would find a rich and fertile field for his labours. In Ireland, however, in a large majority of cases, the priest has been drawn into the dangerous arena of politics. There is no country in the world where political opinion is so sharply divided or where political controversy is conducted with more passion and violence. There is, therefore, no other country where the acceptance by the priest of the post of moderator and controller of partisan passions could be more effectually and beneficially applied. Unhappily, the majority of priests, having thrown themselves into politics, are driven to sanction and even to initiate action which is inconsistent with the tenets of their faith. It is not an agreeable sight to see a priest presiding at a meeting of the League at which it is decided to boycott unpopular

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members of his flock, or to watch him leading his parishioners *en masse* to the poll to vote for some extreme partisan. These spectacles are only too common in Ireland, and the least evil effect of them is to diminish the priest's influence, spiritually as well as socially, with the not inconsiderable section of his parishioners who disagree with his views. But, as I have already said, while there is a growing tendency on the part of the laity to emancipate themselves from the secular influence of the priest, there is also a marked tendency on the part of the enlightened clerics to withdraw themselves from political strife. And it is equally satisfactory to learn that a great number of bishops are encouraging their clergy to devote themselves more to preaching home truths to their people and to inciting them to industry and temperance.

More than one hundred and fifty years ago Bishop Berkeley addressed "A Word to the Wise," in which, appealing to the Roman Catholic clergy for help in the improvement of the material condition of their flocks, he said :—

"Give me leave to tell you that no set

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of men upon earth have it in their power to do good on easier terms, with more advantage to others and less pain or loss to themselves. Your flocks are, of all others, most disposed to follow directions, and, of all others, want them most."

The appeal, as Sir Horace Plunkett points out, is as necessary to-day as when it was first uttered. The priests, or some of them, are beginning to speak out on this subject. The well-known Father Dowling, of Cork, boldly asserted last year, "I find that one of the great difficulties we have to contend with is that the Irish worker will not give an honest day's work for his day's pay." And Canon MacGeeney, corroborating, added: "Father Dowling reflected what appeared to be the general opinion when he said that Irish workmen did not do their work honestly, and thereby placed the whole country and themselves at a serious disadvantage."

I have in my hand the Lenten Pastoral for the present year of the Bishop of Kerry, an able and most enlightened prelate. His political convictions are strongly Nationalist, and have

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never been disguised ; but he does not hesitate to tell his flock some home-truths.

“What strikes the visitor to our country most forcibly,” says the Pastoral, “is the general absence of these qualities (the spirit of work and indomitable energy). The opinion which these visitors generally give expression to is that if the Irish people would only work as hard at home as they do in other lands, under severe climatic and other conditions, their lives would be healthier and happier than those of their brethren in foreign countries.”

And he adds, significantly enough :—

“It is a matter of regret that hitherto the labourers have not derived as much profit as they may from their holdings. In many cases the crops produced are confined to some potatoes and a little cabbage. In too many cases they are given up to the growing of hay. It is quite clear that this is not the most profitable manner of managing them, and that they were never intended solely for these purposes. Under proper cultivation, and with some care, these plots may easily

produce a large amount of most healthy and nourishing food for the family."

And farther on :—

"Allow us to impress on the people the great truth that the good resulting from the Land Acts and the Labour Acts will depend chiefly on the people themselves. If the farmers of the country be not intelligent, thrifty, and industrious, and if the labourers be not disposed to give an honest day's work for a fair day's wage, any and every effort to improve the condition of the country will be doomed to certain failure. . . . The present generation will soon possess all those advantages of which past generations dreamt, and for which they struggled and suffered for many a long year. If through want of energy and industry they fail to avail themselves of those advantages, the fault must be imputed to themselves alone, and can no longer be ascribed to the system under which they live."

There are, moreover, certain phenomena which the bishops and clergy of the Roman Catholic Church might most profitably take into

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## The Priest and Politics

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consideration. Sir Horace Plunkett has called attention to the excessive and extravagant church-building in the heart, and at the expense of, poor communities, which, as he truly says, "has been objected to, on the surely not irreligious ground that the best monument of any clergyman's influence and earnestness must always be found in the moral character and the spiritual fibre of his flock, and not in the marbles and mosaics of a gaudy edifice."

In a note he adds :—

"One of the unfortunate effects of this passion for building costly churches is the importation of quantities of foreign art-work, in the shape of wood carvings, stained glass, mosaics, and metal work. To good foreign art, indeed, one could not within certain limits object. It might prove a valuable example and stimulus. But the articles which have actually been imported, in the impulse to get everything finished as soon as possible, generally consist of the stock pieces produced in a spirit of mere commercialism in the workshops of Continental firms, which make it their business to cater for a public

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who do not know the difference between good art and bad."

There is, moreover, a problem which is closely connected with the sphere of influence, of their success in which the Roman Catholic priesthood is legitimately proud. I mean the control of the morality of their people. No better proof could be adduced of this truth than the returns of the Registrar-General for Ireland of marriages and births. While in Great Britain one child out of twenty-five, roughly speaking, is illegitimate, the proportion per cent. for the whole of Ireland amounts only to 2·6, and in the poor and exclusively Catholic province of Connaught it falls as low as 0·7.

But, on the other hand, one cannot fail to be struck by the terribly low percentage of marriages which are registered in the country. For the whole of Ireland the number of marriages was equal to only 5·26 per 1,000 of the estimated population. Low as this figure is, that of the number of Roman Catholic marriages is lower still, namely 4·95 per 1,000 of the estimated number of Roman Catholics, while that of all other marriages represents a rate of 6·14

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## The Priest and Politics

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per 1,000. Unless I am mistaken, the rate in Ireland of Roman Catholic marriages is lower than that of any other country in Europe. Considerable allowance must be made for the emigration of bachelors and of spinsters of a marriageable age to the Colonies and United States ; but, when this reduction is made, the phenomenon is not fully explained.

It is a serious thing to find that, though the female population of Ireland has decreased more than half a million since 1870, the number of conventional institutions and occupants thereof has largely increased. On the spiritual questions involved in retirement from the world I have nothing to say ; but the application of the principle is so exaggerated in Ireland as compared with other Roman Catholic countries that it is not unreasonable to attribute this multiplication of convents and of nuns to other causes outside a distinct "calling" or vocation. The explanation seems to me to be that young girls, the daughters of peasants and small farmers, who are brought up in the convent schools, contract an aversion for the squalid surroundings and homely manners of their parents, and have acquired

just so much refinement at school as to induce them to look down with something like contempt on the marriageable young men of their own class. In these circumstances, it requires but little stimulus from the priest or the mother-superior of a convent to induce them to take the veil permanently. If the hierarchy abstained from encouraging the conventional life in the absence of a distinct "call," this very serious dearth of marriages would be automatically redressed.

Contrast this state of things with Arthur Young's story, as given in his *Tour in Ireland*, published in 1780 :—

" Marriage is certainly more general in Ireland than in England. I scarce ever found an unmarried cottar or farmer. But it is seen more in other classes, which with us do not marry at all, such as servants. The generality of footmen and maids in gentlemen's families are married, a circumstance we rarely see in England. Another point is their children not being burdensome. In all the inquiries I made into the state of the poor I found their happiness and ease to be generally relative to the

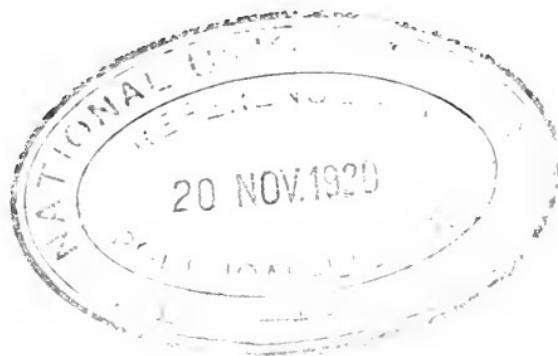
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number of their children, and nothing considered as such a misfortune as having none." Part II., c. 6.

Nor is the paucity of marriages compensated for by the fertility of families. We are crying out because the birth-rate in this country has fallen to 27·2 per thousand of the estimated population; what are we to say of Ireland, when it is only 23·4, while in Roscommon it is only 18·9, in Leitrim 18·5, in Sligo 18·9, and in Cavan 19·0. As a matter of fact, were it not for Dublin with 32·6, and Belfast with 31·8, the average would be even lower still.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE LAND

IRELAND is, and in the most favourable circumstances will be, mainly an agricultural country. The absence of coal and iron and other minerals in profitable quantities is fatal to the hope of developing those great industries which, within the last one hundred and twenty years, have converted Great Britain from an agricultural into a manufacturing country. There are sanguine people who believe that coal may yet be discovered in much larger quantities than is at present the case. There have been twenty-four mines working in the various coalfields, and Professor Hull's estimate in 1881 of the net tonnage available for use in these fields gave 182,280,000 tons, of which about 125,000 tons are raised annually, or a little more than the figures of a quarter of a century ago, whereas Scotland turns out, in the coal basins between Ayr and the Firth of Forth, about 30,000,000 tons annually, or double that of the record of thirty

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years ago. It is possible, of course, that the water-power in Ireland, which is considerable, may be utilised for generating electrical force, and experiments are being constantly made to utilise peat, of which there is an inexhaustible supply, for industrial fuel. But whatever may be the case in the remote future, it is certain that for many generations to come Ireland, outside Ulster and Dublin and Cork, will be dependent for the maintenance of her population chiefly upon agriculture, and the smaller industries which can be carried on with comparatively little capital.

There seems to be in England a very general impression, which is quite a delusion, that the problem of agriculture resolves itself into a question of the ownership of the soil and the relations between landlords and tenants; and it is partly to dispel this delusion that the book, *Economics for Irishmen*, quoted so often, has been written.

In a country like this (says "Pat") where the agrarian interest predominates so abnormally, increased confusion concerning land becomes inevitable. As one of the agents of

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production having to do with all industries, land means one thing, but in its agricultural function it means another thing, quite small in comparison, assuming the conditions normal, though apparently greater in Ireland, the basis being distorted ; and to make the facts fit the confusion we always keep the fraction in front of the whole, always keeping the merely agrarian and proprietary interests of land above all its other economic and vastly more important interests.

And he goes on to say :—

Since the whole agricultural rent, not to mention the reduction in it, does not amount to a tenth of the practicable productivity of the soil, the object of our perennial conflict in the distributive department sinks to insignificance before the productive problem so fatally ignored.

But causes, historical, political, and racial, have combined to absorb all the other factors into a struggle between the owners of the soil and those who till it. The Penal Laws made it impossible for Catholics to hold land, and the consequence was that the fee simple of estates

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## The Land

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was mainly in hands alien in religion, alien in sympathy, and often alien in race. It was one of the most infamous statutes of the Penal Laws that precluded Catholics from purchasing lands, from holding a lease of more than thirty-one years, or from deriving from the permanent occupation of land any profit in excess of one-third of the rent. Consequently the proprietors of estates had no option but to let their lands to the few capitalists who could legally occupy them. These causes gave rise to the prolonged controversy, carried on sometimes with legitimate but more often with illegitimate weapons, between the landlords and the tillers of the soil. It must, however, be remembered that the excessive prominence given to this factor in later years was due to the acumen with which Fintan Lalor, the inventor, and Davitt, the perfector of the system, converted agrarian discontent into that locomotive which was to drag the otherwise inert cause of Repeal or of Home Rule. This truth must be steadily borne in mind at the present moment, for reasons which I will state.

There are very few points upon which the majority of intelligent and educated Irishmen

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are in full agreement, but I found no kind of discord amongst them with regard to the proposition that the various Acts enabling tenants to purchase their own holdings, culminating in the vast and comprehensive measure of 1903, must, if given fair play, eliminate the agrarian factor from the Irish problem. Now it is this very fact that may militate, and to some extent is militating, against the universal application of the principle of purchase. The professional politician deplores the disappearance of the fuel with which he stoked the engine of political agitation and discontent. Were there no agrarian disputes, nine-tenths of the occupation of the United Irish League would be gone. They are already discovering that purchasers under the Act of 1903, and its predecessors, are withholding subscriptions, and are not very keen to attend public meetings. It is true that they still vote for Home Rule, but it is more, as I have said, because of their desire for a quiet life than from any imperative personal interest in the movement. The League, therefore, though it may not openly fight against the Purchase Acts, is already initiating a new agitation, ostensibly based upon the imaginative assertion that the

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## The Land

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tenants are purchasing their holdings at too high a price. The absolute inaccuracy of this allegation I shall demonstrate later on. At the same time, under the new *régime* there can be no doubt but that the Estates Commissioners are, consciously or unconsciously, throwing obstacles in the way of purchase.

In many districts, too, the priests, for reasons which I do not pretend to understand, are endeavouring to discourage the employment of the only solution of the so-called agrarian question. Such being the case, it is necessary that the public on this side of the Channel should have some knowledge of all that has been done to improve the position of the tenant farmer and peasant, at the expense of the landlord.

Those who would realise the state of affairs which preceded Mr. Gladstone's experiments in 1870 cannot do better than study the reports of the Devon Commission, and the excellent pamphlets published by the late Marquis of Dufferin in the years immediately preceding the first Land Act. In a book called *Irish Emigration and the Tenure of Land in Ireland*, Lord Dufferin disposed most conclusively of

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the following series of propositions which were then in vogue :

1. That the emigration from Ireland has been a curse to that country.
2. That this emigration has been occasioned by the eviction of the rural population by their landlords.
3. That acts of eviction in Ireland are to be attributed rather to the cruelty and injustice of the landlords than to any failure on the part of those evicted to fulfil their legitimate obligations.
4. That the present discontent in Ireland has been chiefly occasioned by the iniquity of the laws affecting the tenure of land.
5. That a change in those laws in a specified direction would pacify discontent and create agricultural prosperity.

It is no part of my present task even to summarise the arguments which Lord Dufferin applied in dealing with these propositions. But I am tempted to make one quotation, partly on account of its eloquence, but more particularly because it represents the opinions of the average

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thinking Irishman. These opinions may be exaggerated, but they undoubtedly exist.

"It may be objected," wrote Lord Dufferin, "that even though emigration, rack rents, and their natural result—low farming, are equally rife under every description of tenure, and cannot, therefore, wholly be set down to the pernicious influence of the owners of landed property, yet some human agency must be accountable for the perennial desolation of a lovely and fertile island, watered by the fairest streams, caressed by a clement atmosphere, held in the embraces of a sea whose affluence fills the noblest harbours of the world, and inhabited by a race—valiant, generous, tender—gifted beyond measure with the power of physical endurance, and graced with the liveliest intelligence. . . .

"It has been rather the custom of late to represent the landed interests of Great Britain as the sole inventors and patentees of Protection. The experience of Ireland does not confirm this theory. During the course of the last two hundred and fifty years we have

successively tasted the tender mercies of every interest in turn—whether landed, trading, or commercial, and have little reason to pronounce one less selfish than another. From Queen Elizabeth's reign until within a few years of the Union the various commercial confraternities of Great Britain never for a moment relaxed their relentless grip on the trades of Ireland. One by one each of our nascent industries was either strangled in its birth or handed over, gagged and bound, to the jealous custody of the rival interest in England, until at last every fountain of wealth was hermetically sealed, and even the traditions of commercial enterprise have perished through desuetude.

"The owners of England's pastures opened the campaign. As early as the commencement of the sixteenth century the beeves of Roscommon, Tipperary, and Queen's County undersold the produce of the English grass counties in their own market. By an Act of 20 Elizabeth, Irish cattle were declared a 'nuisance,' and their importation was prohibited. Forbidden to send our beasts alive across the Channel, we killed them at home,

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and began to supply the sister country with cured provisions. A second Act of Parliament imposed prohibitory duties on salted meats. The hides of the animals still remained, but the same influence soon put a stop to the importation of leather. Our cattle trade abolished, we tried sheep farming. The sheep breeders of England immediately took alarm, and Irish wool was declared contraband by a Parliament of Charles II. Headed in this direction, we tried to work up the raw material at home, but this created the greatest outcry of all. Every maker of fustian, flannel, and broad-cloth in the country rose up in arms, and by an Act of William III. the woollen industry of Ireland was extinguished, and 20,000 manufacturers left the island. The easiness of the Irish labour market, and the cheapness of provisions still giving us an advantage, even though we had to import our materials, we next made a dash at the silk business ; but the silk manufacture proved as pitiless as the wool-staplers. The cotton manufacturer, the sugar refiner, the soap and candle maker (who especially dreaded the

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abundance of our kelp), and any other trade or interest that thought it worth its while to petition, was received by Parliament with the same partial cordiality, until the most searching scrutiny failed to detect a single vent through which it was possible for the hated industry of Ireland to respire. But, although excluded from the markets of Britain, a hundred harbours gave her access to the universal sea. Alas! a rival commerce on her own element was still less welcome to England. As early as the reign of Charles II., the Levant, the ports of Europe, and the oceans beyond the Cape were forbidden to the flag of Ireland. The Colonial trade alone was in any manner open—if that could be called an open trade which for a long time precluded all exports whatever, and excluded from direct importation to Ireland such important articles as sugar, cotton, and tobacco. What has been the consequence of such a system, pursued with relentless pertinacity for two hundred and fifty years? This: That, debarred from every other trade and industry, the entire nation flung itself back upon ‘the land,’ with as fatal an impulse as

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when a river whose current is suddenly impeded rolls back and drowns the valley it once fertilised."

These grievances have been admitted. The most generous redress within the power of Parliament to offer has been granted, but it has not been at the expense of the community at large, but almost entirely at that of the landlords in Ireland, who are in no way responsible for the past misdeeds of English Governments. As the late Colonel Saunderson wittily put it, "the tears of Erin are always dried with an Irish pocket-handkerchief."

When Great Britain determined for conscience' sake to put an end to slavery within the Empire, she devoted £20,000,000, or over a third of a year's revenue, to the emancipation of "human chattels," which were legal property under "an old bad system." When, however, it was deemed necessary to emancipate the tillers of the soil from an "old bad system" of land tenure in Ireland, the Imperial Government, ignoring the principle of compensation, effected the "reform" at an ultimate cost, not to the Treasury, but to the landlords, which is

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computed, on a reasonable basis, at exactly the same sum, namely, twenty millions sterling.

We learn from a pamphlet entitled *The Case for the Irish Landlords by One of Them*, published on the eve of the introduction of the Act of 1903, that—

“None of the officials who have confessed to making such an allowance (for occupation interest) put it at less than ten per cent. Since 1881 judicial rents to the amount of £5,147,212 have been fixed by the Land Commissioners, or by agreement out of Court, based generally on the standard furnished by the average decisions of the Court. If these rents have all been fixed ten per cent. below the fair full letting value of the land (after allowing for tenants' improvements) landlords have been mulcted in revenue to the extent of £571,908 in annual income, equal to a capital sum of at least £11,438,160. But every holding to which the Land Act applies is liable to be dealt with in the same way, and the operation, direct or indirect, of such a law so interpreted is not confined to holdings on which judicial rents have actually been fixed. The aggregate rental of holdings to which

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the Land Acts apply cannot well be estimated at less than £10,000,000, and the landlords appear, therefore, to be suffering a mulcture, actual or potential, of about £1,000,000 a year, equivalent to a lump sum of at least £20,000,000."

It is not necessary to analyse the innumerable agrarian Acts passed between 1870 and 1903. It suffices to point out that, beginning with the protection of the tenants against the expropriation of their improvements by the landlords, and against unconscionable and wanton eviction, it ended in reducing the landlord to the position of a mere rent charger on his own estate. All that Lord Salisbury prophesied in 1881 has been realised by events.

In what position, he asked, is the landlord left? He may not select his tenant, he may not deal with his rent, he may not alter the construction of his estate or consolidate farms which may appear to need it. That is not a landlord, he is something between two different characters : he is a sort of mortgagee upon the estate, with an uncertain and precarious hold upon his income.

Of this anomalous position instances, mostly drawn from *The Case for the Landowners*, may be given of comparatively recent date. A landlord desired to facilitate the bringing of a water supply to a country town on his property from springs on a mountain. About half-an-acre of rocky land was required for a reservoir. A tenant enjoyed as part of his judicial tenancy grazing rights over an undivided moiety of this mountain, for which he paid rent at the rate of  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  per acre. With great difficulty, he was induced to surrender his rights over the half-acre required for £20, or 6,400 years' purchase of the judicial rent.

The Fry Commission reported a case in which the judicial rent of a holding of seventy-one acres in County Cork, formerly held at a rent of £77, was fixed at £40 in 1892. The Commissioners who fixed this rent found that there were no improvements, and that the only building on the holding, a thatched cottage of little value, was the landlord's. In 1895 the tenant gave notice of intention to sell. The landlord decided to exercise his right of pre-emption, and the Land Commission fixed the "true value" which the landlord had to pay for possession at £480.

Another case is described in which a tenant took a holding with a mill, dwelling-house, and suitable farm buildings, direct from the landlord, in 1867, at £30 per annum for the land and £20 for the building, and an "input" of £150. In 1876 the landlord voluntarily reduced the rent to £37 for the whole, owing to the mill having ceased to be profitable. In 1884 the tenant went into court, and got the rent reduced to £32. In 1889 the tenant died, and the executors gave notice of intention to sell. The landlord claimed his right of pre-emption. The land was found to have greatly deteriorated during the tenancy—the drains out of order, the buildings mostly in bad repair, some with the roofs off, the mill closed, the times worse. The "true value" which the landlord had to pay for possession was fixed at £450. Deduct £150 originally paid for possession by the tenant, and you have a conveyance from the landlord to the tenant's executors of £300, plus the money equivalent of the deterioration of land and buildings.

It was quite obvious that this state of things could not be indefinitely prolonged, and all parties agreed to the principle that the only solution of the problem was the State-assisted

purchase by the tenant of his holding from the landlord. This was the basis of all the Land Purchase Acts culminating in Mr. Wyndham's great measure of 1903. It is necessarily a very technical Act, but, as of those which preceded it, the gist of it may be very shortly given. The object was to facilitate purchase as between willing sellers and willing buyers, on terms to be agreed upon between them. A bonus of twelve per cent. on the sale was offered to the landlord to facilitate transactions, and to enable him to make provision for agents and others who would be deprived of their occupation and incomes by the transfer of the land to the tenants, and for the expenses of the sales.

It will be remembered that under Mr. Gladstone's Act of 1881, Land Courts were established to fix fair rents when applied to by landlord or tenant, over the whole of Ireland. The Land Law Acts provide that in fixing such rents all tenants' rights and improvements should be taken into consideration. It was further provided that at the end of fifteen years there should be a further revision of rents if so desired. The rents when so fixed

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by the Courts after inspection of the land by valuers have come to be known as first-term and second-term rents respectively, the first-term decision, as a rule, having reduced the original rents by twenty per cent., and the second-term by another twenty per cent.—that is to say, that the rent of a farm let in 1880 at £40 per annum, was reduced in 1882 to £32 per annum, and in 1897 to £25 12s. It is on the basis of these judicial rents that the purchase-price is fixed. The zones or limits are defined by the condition that the annuity to be paid by the tenant purchaser on the purchase-price paid to the landlord shall be less than the judicial rents by from twenty per cent. for "first-term" rents to forty per cent., and from ten per cent. to thirty per cent. for second-term rents, according, as the Act provides, to the bargain made between the parties in such cases the Act presumes there is security for the advance. In cases where no judicial rents have been fixed the question what the Estates Commissioners have to settle, barring of course fraud, duress, or intimidation on either side, is whether the holding affords security and justifies the advance to be made for its purchase.

I have been fortunate enough to secure a table (p. 131) which supplies an illustration of the working of this Act, upon an estate of a typical kind, showing the prices realised by tenant purchasers who, having bought under the Wyndham Act, resold their buildings for cash to other tenants. It sets forth the original rent as fixed by the Courts (Col. 2), the purchase-money paid to the landlord (Col. 4), the annuity due by purchase to Government (Col. 5). In Col. 8 will be found the price paid to purchasers named in Col. 1 for their interest, subject to the annuity in Col. 5. In Col. 9 will be found the estimated additional rent now payable, calculated at three and a half per cent. on price paid by new occupier, in Col. 8. And in Col. 10 is set forth the total rent thus estimated, including the annuity at which the farm is now held, A to F being the purchasers under the Act of 1903, AA to FF being the men to whom A sold his interest, and so on.

It will be seen at once that the new holder on this basis in every case but one pays considerably more for rent than his predecessor did to the original landlord when the rents were fixed by the Court. I may add that these returns refer to an estate in a district about equally divided

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RENT. Date when fixed. Amount.		Pur- chase money.	Tenant's purchaser's interest subject to annuity in Col. 5. Sold to:	Annual repayment to Govern- ment.	Date of purchase by new owner and occupier.	Price paid for occupier's interest subject to annuity in Col. 5.	Estimated additional rent now payable, calculated at 3½ P.C. on price in Col. 8.	Estimated total rent, including annuity at which farm is now held.	Observations.
(1)	(2) £ s. d.	(3)	(4)	(5) £ s. d.	(6)	(7)	(8) £ s. d.	(9) £ s. d.	(10) £ s. d.
A 14 0 0	May 14, 1897	366	A A	11 18 0	Oct., 1905	295	10 6 0	22 4 0	Poor neglected mountain farm.
B 7 11 0	Nov. 8, 1899	197	B B	6 8 2	Sept., 1905	185	6 8 0	12 16 2	Farm badly neglected, buildings in ruins.
C 23 0 0	Oct. 29, 1900	602	C C	18 4 0	April, 1905	220	7 14 0	25 18 0	A family trans- action, into which other considera- tions are supposed to have en- tered.
D 7 10 0	June 9, 1903	176	D D	5 14 6	June, 1905	40	1 8 0	6 2 6	
E 27 0 0	Jan. 25, 1902	706	E E	22 19 0	Oct., 1905	600	21 6 0	43 19 0	
F 9 0 0	—	236	F F	7 12 6	Jan. 3, 1906	185	6 10 0	14 2 6	

between Protestants and Roman Catholics. The landlord was in every respect a good landlord, and was not over-anxious to sell his estate. There were originally one hundred and seven agricultural tenants, fourteen of whom refused to buy, and ninety-three accepted; and of these ninety-three, the six indicated in the table parted with their interests shortly after the conclusion of the sale. The landlord's calculation was based upon the effect of a sale on his income, and that of his successor in title, including the bonus, on the one hand, and relief from charges, etc., on the other; while the terms offered to and accepted by the tenants worked out about fifteen per cent. less than their second-term judicial rents, and twenty-five per cent. less than first-term rents. This is equivalent to about twenty-six and a half years' purchase on second-term rents. Five months' rent, a sort of hanging gale, was forgiven, and turbary (the right of cutting peat) was allowed without extra charge. With the exception of one purchaser, a retired publican, all those indicated in Column 6 were *bona-fide* farmers, not under any special "land-hunger" pressure, and there is every reason to assume that they

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know the value of what they bought, in all cases by private treaty, for no auction took place.

It has been alleged by those interested in arresting the development of this beneficial scheme that the purchasing tenants are paying too high a price for their holdings. It would not appear that Mr. J. E. Redmond shares this opinion, for he received as purchase-money for his property a price less favourable to the tenants than most other vendors. I was amused to read two or three speeches by leading Nationalists in different parts of the country excusing Mr. Redmond on the ground that he was so absorbed in promoting the general interests of Ireland in Parliament that he had to commit the control of his estate to others. It did not seem to occur to his apologists that if Mr. Redmond inadvertently received more than morally he was entitled to, there was a very simple expedient at his command to redress the wrong.

But lest it should be supposed that I have selected an exceptional case, I append another table, with examples of the price realised in the last few years for tenant rights in six of the poorer counties of Ireland.

# Ireland To-day and To-morrow

Average of holding.	Valuation.	Rent.	Price paid for tenant's interest.	No. of years' purchase.	Notes.
COUNTY LEITRIM:					
(a) 10 1 5	£ s. d. 2 15 0	£ s. d. 1 2 4 (non-judicial rent)	£ s. d. 114 0 0	102	
(b) 31 0 0	12 0 0	7 14 0 (judicial rent)	370 0 0	48	Bad land.
(c) 13 3 0	2 0 0	3 7 6 (judicial)	100 0 0	30	Very bad land.
COUNTY CLARE:					
(a) 16 0 0	5 6 8	3 11 2 (judicial)	110 0 0	31	Indifferent land.
(b) 8 0 0	1 0 0	1 17 0 (judicial)	60 0 0	32	Good land.
COUNTY CORK:					
(a) 50 0 0	25 0 0	22 10 0 (judicial)	450 0 0	20	Indifferent land.
(b) 16 0 0	8 0 0	7 0 0 (judicial)	252 0 0	36	Good land.
COUNTY LIMERICK:					
(a) 80 0 0	102 0 0	72 0 0 (judicial)	1,425 0 0	20	Good land.
(b) 99 0 0	34 15 0	30 0 0 (non-judicial)	790 0 0	26	Indifferent land.
COUNTY GALWAY:					
(a) 30 0 0	13 5 0	12 10 0 (non-judicial)	415 0 0	33	Indifferent land.
(b) 8 0 0	3 10 0	2 14 7 (judicial)	70 0 0	25	Indifferent land.
COUNTY MAYO:					
(a) 12 0 0	6 0 0	4 16 6 (judicial)	160 0 0	33	Good land.
(b) 8 0 0	4 5 0	3 12 0 (judicial)	105 0 0	29	Indifferent land.

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The first case, of course, is altogether exceptional, and is only quoted to show the lengths to which purchasers will sometimes go in buying a desired farm. In almost all these instances the value of the tenant right was far greater than that of the landlord's interest in the property.

There can be no doubt whatever of the advantage to the purchasing tenants of this Act. And the rush to take advantage of its provisions astonished the most sanguine, and proved to a certainty that the terms were wholly favourable to the purchasers. Out of £150,000,000, the sum available for the purpose under all the Purchase Acts, the advance of some £45,000,000 has been applied, though the money has not yet been paid. But since the accession of the present Government to office there has been a growing slackness in the applications, or, at any rate, in the conclusion of agreements. In part, no doubt, this is due to the price of Irish Land Stock, which to-day stands at a discount of over twelve per cent. and prevents advances being made, and there is perhaps some reason for a demand frequently heard in Ireland, that the Imperial Exchequer should

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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bear the loss occasioned by this decline of the market value of the Land Stock, instead of leaving it to be borne, as is the case, by Ireland alone. Unfortunately, however, this is not the chief obstacle to the rapid transfer of land. In the first place, there is a growing belief entertained by many would-be purchasers that with the expected concession of Home Rule they will be able to buy their holdings—if they do not get them for nothing—on much easier terms than are possible to-day. This belief, I need hardly say, is sedulously fostered by the leaders of the United Irish League; and, I am sorry to add, by not a few priests.

I have already stated in another article the reasons which induce the United Irish League to take this course. They are very loth to part with an instrument so invaluable to them in promoting agitation where it is necessary. But chief of all causes is, in my opinion, the action of the Estates Commissioners, based, as one naturally supposes, upon definite instructions from the Castle. There is no secret about the fact that the Commissioners are divided in opinion, because the last report for the year 1906 contains many paragraphs in

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which Mr. F. S. Wrench, the Senior Commissioner, expresses his dissent from the opinions and practice of his colleagues. One function of the Estates Commission is to determine, when an agreement has been effected outside the zones between landlord and tenant, whether the holding proposed to be transferred is of sufficient value to pay the instalments agreed upon by the tenant. So long as there is sufficient margin of profit for this purpose, it is no business of the Estates Commissioners to say whether either landlord or tenant has made a foolish bargain. The only question for the Estates Commissioners is to decide whether their joint interests are of sufficient value to justify the advance of the purchase-money. That is Mr. Wrench's view of the position, as recorded in the last report, and he seems certainly to have been justified by recent decisions that have come before the Law Courts. His two colleagues, however, apparently think that they are to combine the functions of Land Commissioner and Estates Commissioner. In the report before-mentioned there occurs this paragraph :—

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" It appears to Mr. Wrench that the above observations (by his colleagues) assume that the Commissioners have power, even in cases of direct sales, to fix prices ; for that, in his opinion, is what the claim to review prices fixed by the agreement of the parties, and apart from any question of security, really comes to. Mr. Wrench does not join in this view. He has always understood that the price was a matter to be arranged between landlord and tenant, and that it was for them to settle what the purchasing price of the holding was to be ; and that when they had so agreed it was the duty of the Commissioners under the Act, while carefully guarding against fraud, duress, or intimidation on either side, to measure the amount of the advance, having due regard to security, which the holding, as it stands, would afford for the repayment of the advance applied for, which advance and the annuity thereon would have priority over all the other interests in the holding, no matter how created."

And this is certainly the view communicated by Mr. Wyndham, the author of the Act, to the House of Commons during the debates in

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1903. I came across a case myself which illustrates the new spirit animating the majority of the Estates Commissioners. It was in the south. The estate in question was a small one, and the tenants were more anxious to buy than the landlord was to sell. However, an agreement was reached, and only wanted the sanction of the Commission. Immediately the document was signed on behalf of the landlord and the tenants one of the prospective purchasers sold his interest to another man for £500. So convinced were they all that the other steps in the arrangement would be merely formal that the man who bought turned in his cattle to graze on a holding which he supposed was virtually his. An inspector came down from the Commission, who, hearing of the transaction, went to the latest purchaser and said he was mad to give £500 for the interest in the holding, which itself was not worth the amount. Thereupon the new purchaser backed out of his agreement, and his example was followed by the other tenants. How general this practice may be I do not pretend to know ; I can only state that I heard complaints on the same subject in many parts of Ireland.

In addition to the obstacles to rapid progress

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in the transference of land from the landlord to the tenant is the ever-present shadow of Home Rule. A large number of the tenants are persuaded that if they wait till an independent Parliament is established in Dublin they will get possession of the land, if not for nothing, at least at prairie value. Landlords wishing to reside in Ireland and to do their duty amongst those with whom they have lived all their lives are apprehensive that an independent Irish Government would compel those who sold their estates to part also with the demesne lands in which their home is situated, and home farms and other lands used by them for grazing. It may well prove, moreover, that Imperial credit will have to be pledged to a still greater amount than it is, if such processes are carried to a successful end. What chance is there that English capitalists would respond to an appeal for larger funds if the control of the administration was vested in the hands of Irish politicians? It is tolerably safe to prophesy that the introduction of a Devolution scheme will further depreciate the value of land stock. And every decline in this stock puts a brake upon the wheels of progress. There are,

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however, deeper arguments against Home Rule supplied by this most salutary scheme of purchase. Under cautious and vigilant Imperial administration, obvious dangers inherent in that policy may be averted, or at any rate kept within safe limits. Some of these dangers have been already incidentally indicated. If there was any justice whatever in the old cry that the farmers of Ireland were over-rented by the landlord, and left without an adequate margin of the profit furnished by the land, there must be considerable danger in the enormous prices paid for the tenant's interest after he has bought from his landlord. In a very considerable number of cases the price thus paid is so high as to encumber any farmer who does not begin with very substantial capital. The gombeen man, or usurer, is much in evidence in Ireland, and he—or she, for the calling is not confined to one sex—has increased and flourished exceedingly since land legislation in 1881 gave the tenants the right of free sale. Their power has grown correspondingly, for they are shrewd enough to be liberal subscribers to the funds of the United Irish League. If a proof is wanted of their influence, it may be found in

the hostility displayed by the *Freeman's Journal* and by Mr. John Dillon to the development of the co-operative movement in Ireland, which is one of the most promising features of the Irish problem to-day. One of the chief objects of this organisation is to enable the small farmers to dispense with the aid of the gombeen and to secure the proper market price for the main products of the soil. This new class of owners in the hands of the gombeen man will be in a far worse position than when they were "rack-rented" by the old class of landlord. A crisis will hereafter occur, which will necessitate either wholesale evictions by the Government for non-payment of instalments, or the loss to the taxpayers of the United Kingdom of the money guaranteed by Act of Parliament. A strike against the payment of instalments is, though conceivable, in the last degree improbable under the present system. The average intelligent Irishman would regard such a phenomenon as more likely than not to occur if the administration of the country were in the hands of politicians who owe their position largely to the contributions of gombeen men. This danger is one which must

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surely appeal to the pockets of the English taxpayer, and especially to that large class which demands costly legislation from the Government.

The Estates Commissioners have power under the Act to forbid sub-letting and sub-division by purchasers. It is often said that the landlords, under the old *régime*, might have prevented the sub-letting and sub-division of farms by inserting prohibitory clauses in their leases. They tried to do so, but it was, however, proved, to the satisfaction of the Devon Commission, that in this respect the landlords were helpless. The land let directly to middlemen on leases containing these prohibitory clauses were sub-let to such an extent that it was impossible to trace the real culprit; and juries systematically refused to find verdicts for the landlord when he acted upon his right to prohibit sub-division. Indeed, it was made clear to the Commissioners that the law expenses in trials in which an unsuccessful attempt was made to prevent sub-letting, almost invariably amounted to more than the fee simple of the farm in question was worth. The prohibition, even to-day, is more easy to enact than to

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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enforce. I met in the course of my tour scores of cases where farmers who had bought under the Purchase Acts were allowing their pastures to be grazed by the cattle of publicans and others in the nearest town. On one estate I came across entry after entry in a report made as to the present position of the purchaser, which ran as follows: "A, 15 acres, cultivates a third, sub-lets the rest to X. B, 12 acres, cultivates two acres, lets the remainder to Y." And so on and so on. Of course no formal agreement committed to writing between the owner and the sub-tenant exists, for such a document would vitiate the owner's title in the Act. But the transaction is effected surreptitiously, and money passes without receipts being given, and it is not in the interests of one party or the other to sue. Again, with regard to subdivision. Under the old system, which we are now striving to destroy, a tenant farmer holding his land under a lease would build houses or cottages for his sons, as they grew up and married, and would parcel out the land amongst them. That being no longer legal, in many cases the owner adds to his original homestead and takes the son and his wife to

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live with him, quietly dividing the interests in the farm. Moreover there is a growing abuse of the Labourers' Dwelling Acts. Very great improvement has been effected in the social and sanitary position of the labourer by the erection of decent and well-built cottages ; but already here and there farmers are obtaining these cottages for their sons who are only partly engaged upon the paternal farm, with the consequence that a new state of congestion with the inevitable cry of "More land" is created.

Lastly, there is a difficulty which has prevailed under every system, and for which I can see no practicable remedy. It is the ambition of every farmer to "provide" not only amply, but extravagantly, for such of his daughters as do not enter convents or migrate. In the old days this was effected by sub-dividing the farm for the benefit of the daughters as well as the younger sons. To-day this system is prohibited ; but the prohibition is rendered null and void in effect because the farmer either hoards money needed for the farm, or imposes a moral obligation upon his eldest son, or other sole devisee of the land, to make provision

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for the daughters and younger sons. The inevitable result of this is that the second owner has to encumber himself with charges the interest on which amounts to at least as much as the original rent. All these drawbacks to the ultimate success of the Purchase Acts would be intensified tenfold were an Irish Executive in power responsible to a Home Rule Parliament.

Even supposing that the operation of these beneficial Acts should withdraw the agrarian question out of the field of political controversy Ireland would by no means have done with the question of agriculture. If every man in Ireland who has been, or is now, a tenant were provided with a farm Ireland itself would be none the better off unless he were capable of working that farm to the best advantage. Unfortunately, this is very far indeed from being the case. In *Economics for Irishmen* "Pat" puts the case thus :—

The most myopic Little Irishman mastered by the little land problem has never claimed more than some "reduction" in the twelfth penny with some change in the ownership,

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from which it does not necessarily follow that the nation's land must be of more benefit to the nation. Take a £10-a-year holding, bought by the tenant at a purchase annuity that means a total reduction of fifty per cent. Here the tenant gains £5 a year. By proper management and working this holding can produce in the gross at least £100 a year for the labour now expended. Which is the more worth considering? Over very large areas the present productivity of such a holding is probably not £35, and the easily-acquired balance of £65 a year is ignored in order to secure the £5 a year. Assuming the annuity at an end (in seventy years) and the peasant's property an unencumbered freehold, the total gain is still only £10 a year. On the one hand we have what can be done by a proper organisation of the agents of production in agriculture; on the other hand we have a whole nation ignoring that great purpose for a £5 note which even then is not a national gain. The fallacy does not end here. Assume the whole agricultural rental of Ireland turned out of the landlords' pocket and into the peasants', it does not follow that the

national wealth is increased by a penny. What happens is that a certain percentage of the national wealth changes hands from one class of Irishmen to another class of Irishmen. The transaction *per se* does not imply a farthing of increase in the total agricultural productivity, which is the one and only thing of permanent material value to the nation as a whole in so far as the land is concerned.

Dr. Healy, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, in a Church address delivered on April 17, 1906, told the people :—

In no other part of the world is agriculture in such a deplorable condition as in the West of Ireland. Where are the stores of hay and oats you should have at this period of the year ? Where are the vegetables you should have in your gardens ? You do not cultivate a sufficient acreage, and what you do cultivate gets only an apology for cultivation. In my journey from Menlough yesterday I did not see half-a-dozen well-cultivated fields. I saw no hay or corn in your haggards, no vegetables in your gardens. You depend almost entirely

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on shop feeding stuffs for your stock, and on shop foods for yourselves. . . . As I implied before, you do not deserve to be called farmers. You make a few spasmodic efforts at spring and autumn, and you sleep the rest of the year.

Yet, as we shall see, any effort of a voluntary character to improve farming in Ireland, such as the Co-operative Organisation or the establishment of land banks, the value of which has been so thoroughly proved in Germany, is at once severely boycotted by the organs of the United Irish League. Is there any one who believes that an Irish Parliament, controlled by the League, would lend encouragement to these movements?

Two problems must strike the most unob-servant of travellers in Ireland, and the OEdipus who can read the riddle aright will hold the key to the whole Irish question. The one problem is supplied by the migratory labourer, and the other by the Royal Irish Constabulary. "Pat" puts the first problem succinctly, as usual:—

Only a few hours' journey from Connaught to Lancashire, and at one end the Irishman

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has a reputation as one of the worst workers in the world, while at the other end he cannot find his superior. As if he changed his character on the way across. And seriously, I question whether it is not more a fact than a figure. Of course, the end of the journey at which the Irish worker wins his bad reputation is at home—always giving the worst of himself to Ireland and the best to the “inimy,” while shouting his readiness “to die for the ould sod.” We are ever ready to “die” for Ireland, but never to live for her.

And later on he gives further illustrations :—

Only last year Father Farrell, of Navan, found it necessary to deliver a strong criticism on Messrs. Clayton’s textile workers, of whom a ruinous percentage could not be got to come in time, with the result of leaving expensive machinery unworked, power wasted, and fixed expenses unproductive generally, not to mention other workers on the spot unable to work without the co-operation of those absent. . . . I am told on authority that one of the main causes for shutting up the great cotton mills of Drogheda was that the workpeople could

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never be got to their work punctually. The end of the once extensive ironworks at Arigna, in Leitrim, was the whole night staff getting drunk, defying the foreman, and letting the fluxed metal cool to a solid state in the furnaces.

It is hardly necessary to multiply proofs of a depressing phenomenon which is admitted by all parties in Ireland. Men of high position, such as the late Lord Dufferin and, to a lesser extent, Sir Horace Plunkett—than whom Ireland has no better friend—seek to palliate this painful trait in the character of Irish labourers by attributing it to the influence of the very real wrongs which Ireland sustained for so many centuries. Others ascribe it to the want of Home Rule; and another set explain the phenomenon by alleging it to be due to climatic causes. But there seems to me to be one fatal objection to all these explanations, and that is that when the migratory labourer comes to England, or to Scotland, he exhibits none of those defects which are so unpleasantly conspicuous when he is making believe to work for himself. The old adage *coelum non animum*,

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etc., must hold good here. There is no doubt that the labourer who returns in the autumn to his own holding, is physically and morally a better man for the time, and certainly is better clad and more self-respecting, but he relapses rapidly till the season comes to cross the seas again. It may be thought that this fact lends strength to the climatic theory. But the simple answer to this retort is that there is no body of men in the world more active, alert, punctual, and indefatigable than the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, who are recruited almost exclusively from the class just above that of the labourers. If climatic conditions do not exercise a deteriorating influence over the Constabulary, who never leave the island, why should they do so over the labourer ?

Most conclusive of all is the experience gained by local authorities in the congested districts. I was told by several officials whose duty it was to supervise roadmaking, that the Irish labourer with the ganger's eye upon him turned out admirable work, and gave very little cause for complaint. There is one instructive difference in the two sets of cases I have cited : In the one there is the absence of all discipline, and in the

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other its active influence. The Irish labourer who comes over to Great Britain is perfectly well aware that if he does not fulfil his part of the contract he will be incontinently dismissed, and in like manner with the men employed by the Congested Districts Board in Ireland ; and, as the Royal Irish Constabulary is a semi-military force, discipline becomes early the very breath of their nostrils, and rises far superior in influence to any fear of dismissal. This seems to me to explain the apparent paradox, and to justify " Pat's " conclusion when he asks the question :—

What, then, are we to make of the national complaint that the Government is the cause of our failure at home while we succeed abroad ? We succeed abroad (he replies) simply because a foreigner forces us to accommodate ourselves to his higher and more efficient activity. We do not succeed at home because, governed by our own conditions and standpoints only, we fail to realise the efficient level. When the really efficient individual appears among us we are as likely to boycott him as to be

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influenced by him ; in short, at home the controlling conditions are those of inefficiency, and efficiency is the exception. That is why there are fewer of us each year that comes round. In the modern public life of this country not one man has attempted to present the real causes of our decay without making himself unpopular by it, so dear is our inefficiency to us, so intolerant are we of any influence that could raise us to the level of progressive peoples.

Does any one believe that the concession of Home Rule or of Devolution would be a panacea for this moral and economic evil ? There may be such in England, but it is impossible for me to imagine the existence of any number of intelligent and educated men who hold such a belief in Ireland. For my own part, recent experiences in Ireland have strengthened a conviction, but half developed twenty years ago, that the Home Rule and Nationalist party are putting the cart before the horse. I could understand a plea, and a very good plea, being put in for the grant of almost complete autonomy to an Ireland peopled by a self-

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relian, independent, self-respecting race, educated sufficiently to realise that separation from Great Britain would be infinitely more disastrous to the interests of Ireland than it could be to England and Scotland. It has been well said that when Irishmen are fit for Home Rule they will not ask for it. Politics have been the curse of Ireland, and the agrarian successes gained by the Nationalist party in the last thirty or forty years have nourished the baneful idea in the eyes of the uneducated that the politician can do more for the individual than the individual can do for himself. A more pernicious fallacy was never propagated. The politician may succeed in securing for the some-time tenant without money and without price the fee simple to his holding. What better off is he than before, if he has not learnt that by skill and industry alone can he extract a living from the soil ?

Let me once more quote from " Pat " :—

On a fine working day last winter I walked fourteen statute miles in a congested district in Mayo, from Swinford to Ballyhaunis, to observe the better at my walking-pace how

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they might happen to be occupied for the day, and in the whole journey I saw "at work" only one man, who had his hands in his pockets and his shoulders humped against the wind. He was looking amongst his sheep, and so I call it work, he being an Irish farmer. The fences were down which ought to keep out the cattle next summer, and so let the children go to school. But the compulsory clause of the Education Act was not in force ; the local politicians were afraid to enforce it, and the parents were free to bring up their families like themselves, with their hands in their pockets and their humps against the wind. I saw not one acre yet ploughed, and the winter weeds were strengthening their hold on next year's potato-fields, making double work for the coming June, when there would be no time to do it. On that day, in that region, the Government had bodies of men at work on improvements to farms, under the Congested Districts Board, paying the people wages out of the taxes to do their own work.

## CHAPTER VII

### REMEDIAL WORK

IN my last chapter I dwelt upon the economic shortcomings of Irishmen, due, as I believe, to want of proper training and education, and not to historic, political, and other causes, to which, for party purposes, they have been usually attributed. If the diagnosis of the politicians is correct, then it would seem that the malady under which Ireland is suffering was incurable. Most intelligent Nationalists will tell you that they have very little fault to find with the manner in which the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction performs its work ; they only complain that it is not a department of a Government responsible only to an independent Irish Parliament. I feel tempted to say, God help it if it were. Its difficulties are sufficiently formidable as it is. If its work were to be daily and hourly criticised and thwarted by an Irish Parliament under the influence of the most parochial local

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considerations, and moulded by the importunities of members whose seats were dependent upon what they extorted for their constituents from the Government, the task would be absolutely impossible. But perhaps this truth will be more easily realised if I set forth the nature and functions of both the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction and those of the Congested Districts Board. Though the former is junior in age, it is by far the more important, because much of the work of the Congested Districts Board will, it is to be hoped, lapse with the disappearance of the conditions which called the Board into existence. The Department was created by an Act of 1899, passed in Mr. Gerald Balfour's Administration as Chief Secretary for Ireland. It consists of the Chief Secretary of the day, who is constituted President, and of a Vice-President, assisted by a number of highly-trained experts in agriculture and technical instruction, and by a staff of officials. Associated with the Department, "for the purpose of assisting it in carrying out the objects of the Act," are a Council of Agriculture, a Board of Agriculture, and a Board of Technical Instruction. Each of these bodies

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contains both an elective and a nominative element. The Council of Agriculture is composed of one hundred and two members, of whom two-thirds are elected members of county councils, the remaining third being nominated by the Department. The two Boards, much smaller in number, are appointed by the Council of Agriculture and by the Department, in the same proportions. Hence it will be seen that the machinery of the Act was designed to bring the Department into close touch with popular feeling. Another feature of the scheme designed to carry out effective co-operation between the Department and local opinion was secured by the appointment of local committees by county and urban district councils. The Council of Agriculture meets at "least once a year"; its functions are advisory. The two Boards meet frequently, on an average once every two months. The Board of Agriculture advises the Department on all questions submitted to it by the latter, and its concurrence is required for the expenditure of any money out of the Department's endowment. The objections that might be raised to the exercise of their power of the veto on the part of the Board were not

overlooked by the Government of 1899—*e. g.*, a deadlock might be produced were the Board to withhold its concurrence, and there might also be serious friction between the Department and the Board. But the scheme was an experiment, and as such must be judged by its results. The relations between the two bodies have been of the most harmonious kind, and the Board has not exercised its right of veto. The powers of the Board of Technical Instruction are more restricted than those of the Board of Agriculture—*e. g.*, the allocation of the funds at its disposal is regulated by the statute, and in other respects its functions are more circumscribed ; it is prohibited, for instance, from subsidising urban industries. It may give technical instruction in the principles underlying a trade or industry.

The funds placed at the disposal of the Department consist of an annual income of £171,000, together with other contributions from the Congested Districts Board (in respect of Agricultural work, recently transferred by that Board to the Department), from the development grant and other sources, which bring the total income in the present year up to

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£298,833. In addition there are lying to the credit of the Department accumulated unexpended balances from previous years amounting to over £350,000.

The task with which the Department was called upon to deal when it was established in 1899 was one of enormous difficulty. It had, in the first place, to formulate its policy for the development of agriculture and technical instruction. This it proceeded at once to do through its expert advisers, by consultations with local representative bodies, by exhaustive inquiries, and by careful study of local conditions and requirements. This done, the Department had to devise methods for putting the provisions of the Act into operation by the consideration and issue of the schemes dealing with a multitude of subjects. There was much difficulty in inducing the people and local statutory committees to understand the aims and methods of the Department, which were largely adapted from Continental models, and were quite new to Ireland, and another difficulty encountered by the Department was traceable to the fact that the Department was a "Castle board," inspired by sinister political motives! That

there has been friction from time to time between the local statutory committees and the Department cannot be denied, but such friction was inevitable in the working of the machinery of the Act, especially in the earlier years, and it is safe to say that disputes and differences of opinion have at the present date almost disappeared. It is the opinion of all fair-minded men that the work of the Department has been carried out with marked ability and a considerable measure of success, and that the unfavourable criticisms of its methods have been due to a want of appreciation of the intricate and complex problems with which it had to deal. The funds and energies of the Department have been expended in laying foundations, and the results of this expenditure are already manifesting themselves throughout the country, even to those who, while still carping at its methods, participate in the resulting benefits.

The following statement of work done on the agricultural side of the Department's administration will enable those not already conversant with the details to judge of the value of the policy pursued, and of the benefits

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which have accrued, and are still accruing, to the farming population of Ireland.

For the development of agricultural education the Department's programme provides for the instruction of farmers' sons at two central institutions in Dublin, the Royal College of Science and the Albert Agricultural College, Glasnevin, at three provincial stations, Athenry, co. Galway ; Clonakilty, co. Cork ; and Ballyhaise, co. Cavan. The fees paid at these institutions are extremely moderate ; in some cases no fees at all are charged. A large number of students are availing themselves of the instruction provided at these places. In addition, there are what are called winter schools of agriculture, established at a number of centres throughout the country, all largely attended by farmers' sons, and in every county the department has at work an itinerant instructor, who delivers frequent lectures, free of cost to his audiences, and, by means of small demonstration and experimental plots laid down in considerable numbers in the county, imparts practical instruction to farmers as to the uses of manures and the best methods to be adopted in cultivating their holdings.

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For girls there are the dairy schools at the Munster Institute, Cork, and at Loughsey, co. Tyrone; rural schools of domestic economy at Portumna, co. Galway; Westport, co. Mayo; Loughglynn, co. Roscommon; and Dunmanway, co. Cork; and itinerant instruction in dairying and poultry-keeping throughout rural districts.

Independently of these courses of education in agricultural matters, the Department has been engaged in the work of improving the breeds of live-stock—an industry which is of primary importance to Ireland. Schemes dealing with cattle-breeding, horse-breeding, and pig-breeding are in operation all over Ireland, and the improvements effected as a result of the working of these schemes are acknowledged on all sides.

There are also numerous county schemes connected with butter-making, poultry-keeping, horticulture, bee-keeping, and flax cultivation—all admittedly successful and of great benefit to the people.

With respect to technical instruction, very considerable progress has been made in urban centres in this direction, and the assistance the

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Department is giving towards the provision of technical training for the youth of the country is almost incalculable. Here, again, facilities are provided for the training of teachers in technological subjects at central institutions in Dublin ; schemes of technical instruction have been adopted, and are working in all the more important urban districts ; trades' preparatory schools have been established at a number of centres ; and for girls, instruction is widely provided in domestic economy, lace-making, and other industries.

Considering the limited means at present at the disposal of the Department, its success has been little short of marvellous. With regard to agriculture generally, Ireland has not only much to learn but a great deal to unlearn, and the object of the Department is to level up the whole country to the standard attained by agricultural countries in Europe. One of the chief complaints is, of course, that other than Irishmen are employed to do the educational work. These experts are mostly Scotchmen, for the excellent reason that the Scotch have a well-deserved reputation of being the best farmers in the world. The grumblers do not take into

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consideration the very obvious fact that it is just because Ireland stands in need of elementary training in all forms of agriculture, and especially in what is called the "little culture," that but few competent teachers can be found amongst her sons and daughters. Mr. Cecil Rhodes experienced exactly the same difficulty in Cape Colony when he started his most successful scheme of fruit-growing in Stellenbosch and at the Paarl. He found very few Afrikanders competent to apply the latest scientific discoveries to the advancement of fruit-growing. He therefore imported Scotchmen, most of whom had served an apprenticeship in California; and, placing them at the head of the different farms, he supplied them with two Afrikander assistants, who, in turn, became qualified to act as instructors to others. A similar result, it is hoped, will be found in Ireland. Every year the number of students attending the various agricultural schools and classes shows a marked and most satisfactory increase. The Department, as we have seen, was formed only in 1899. In the second year of its existence only one county adopted the scheme for instruction in horticulture; in 1904-05 there were seventeen

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counties on the list. In 1900-01 only four counties adopted the suggestions for the encouragement of poultry-keeping, which is a most important industry, and from which much is hoped. In 1904-05 there were only three administrative counties which did not employ an instructor. And the number of eggs distributed to improve the breed of poultry rose from 4,000 in 1901-02 to 49,191 in 1904-05. In 1901 only a single county applied for instructors in home butter-making ; in 1904-05 twenty-two counties were supplied at their own request. Equally satisfactory has been the success of the efforts made to improve cattle-breeding and horse-breeding, by importing better stock and by the grant of premiums to home-bred sires, with the result, to take cattle only, that the number of premiums in the Congested Districts alone amounted to 228 in 1905, compared to forty-three in 1901. The system of giving prizes for small cottages and farms has been attended with such success that twenty-seven counties are adopting the scheme to-day, where only two were on the list in 1901. The number of entries for these prizes, as the report informs us, shows the interest which has been aroused

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by these competitions, the total numbers being 3,065 in 1904 and 3,146 in 1905. In County Dublin in 1904 all cottages erected by the Rural Districts Council were regarded as entered for competition, and were duly inspected, but in 1905 the system of voluntary entry was adopted, under which 217 cottages competed. In the remaining twenty-four counties which adopted the scheme in 1904 there has been accordingly an increase in the entries for 1905 of over twenty per cent. The report of the judges is also of much interest. They comment

Favourably in nearly all cases on the cleanliness and order of the dwelling-houses, but have been compelled to draw attention to the untidy state of the out-offices. In this respect the cottages erected under the Labourers' Acts have compared very unfavourably in some counties with the non-union cottages. In general, the cultivation of the gardens leaves much to be desired; the variety of vegetables is poor and fruit is little grown. The arrangements of manure heaps and provision for collecting liquid manure receives little attention. The judges

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as a rule complain of the weedy condition of the fields, due, as they point out, often to the use of inferior seeds, as well as to want of weeding. Housing accommodation for live stock and poultry is, on the whole, poor. Byres and fowl-houses are often very badly kept. The judges almost unanimously lay stress on the fact that green crops are not sufficiently grown for the winter feeding of cattle. The dairy accommodation is described as defective, the milk and butter being often kept in unsuitable places. The judges' report contains many references to the beneficial results of the live stock and agricultural schemes. For example, methods of farming are more advanced in those counties in which itinerant instructors in agriculture have been at work. The influence of the egg-distribution stations on the character of the fowl is, in many places, very noticeable. The quality of the live stock has been raised by the use of premium bulls and boars.

The business of drying and otherwise preserving fruits and vegetables has also been encouraged by this beneficent department, as,

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indeed, has every other branch of agriculture. To turn over the pages of the annual report is almost equivalent to studying an encyclopædia. Take, for example, the cultivation of flax, the staple of the Ulster linen trade. In the year 1860 the area under flax was 128,595 acres. That rose to 301,693 acres in 1864, since when it has rapidly declined, until in the year 1904 the area had sunk to 44,293 acres. Of course, the extraordinary increase between 1860 and 1864 was due to the Civil War in America, and the stoppage there of the cultivation of cotton. But the restoration of the normal condition of things will not account for the dependence of Ulster upon foreign flax. Nor is it merely the cheapness of the foreign competition which is responsible for the decline. The fact was that the manipulation and scutching of flax in the North of Ireland was very inferior to that employed in Belgium and Holland and elsewhere, and in seeking to remedy these defects the Department of Agriculture is rendering a very real service to Ireland.

I have chosen but a few of the manifold subjects with which this indefatigable department deals. Perhaps the simplest way of demonstrating the

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area covered by their operations is to give the table of contents in the annual report dealing with agriculture alone, and omitting those other parts referring to technical education, transit and markets, statistics, and general intelligence, etc.

Agricultural instruction at the Royal College of Science, at the Albert Agricultural College, Glasnevin, and at the Munster Institute, Cork : Agricultural Schools and Classes, Itinerant Instruction in Agriculture, Agricultural Stations, Horticulture and Bee-keeping, Poultry-keeping, Home Butter-making, Pioneer Lectures, Horse Breeding, Cattle Breeding, Swine Breeding, Subsidies to Shows, Prizes for Small Farms and Cottages, Field Experiments, Special Barley Experiments, Early Potato Growing, Fruit and Vegetable Preserving, Cheese-making, Calf Feeding, Seed Testing Station, Tobacco Growing, Analysis of Spraying Material, Manufacture of Peat Fuel, Flax Growing, Purification of Creamery Sewage, Improvement in Creamery Management, Surprise Butter Competitions, Fruit as a Farm Crop, Forestry, Mortality in Young Cattle, Poultry Fattening.

I have made no attempt to do justice either

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to the labours or the achievements of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Education. To do so would require a volume at least as bulky as that of the annual report issued by the Department. My object is to call attention to the beneficent work accomplished by a body of officials which, though thoroughly representative in the true sense of the word, is not political. These qualifications apply also to the following references to the work of the Congested Districts Board.

This Board came into existence under the 36th Section of the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, which provided that where more than twenty per cent. of the population of any county in Ireland live in electoral divisions of which the total rateable value, when divided by the number of the population, gives a sum of less than thirty shillings for each individual, such electoral divisions shall be deemed to form a separate county, known as a congested district county. The districts which, accordingly, have been declared congested, embrace part of each county in Connaught, and part of Clare, Cork, Kerry and Donegal, with an area of over three and a half million acres and a population of

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over half a million. The Poor Law valuation of these districts amounts to about one pound per individual. The accompanying map (p. 174) will show (dotted) the proportion of congested districts to the rest of Ireland.

Beginning in 1891-92 with a total income from all sources of £16,590, and an expenditure of £3,660; in 1905-06 the total receipts amounted to £390,352, and the total expenditure to £375,065, the fixed income at the disposal of the Board being £16,590 in the first year and £86,250 in 1905-06. The Board was empowered to direct its efforts, first, as regards agriculture, towards increasing the size of small holdings, chiefly by their amalgamation of such holdings and by migrations to available land, improving live stock, and methods of cultivation; and, in the second place, towards creating and developing, by indirect as well as by direct means, all suitable industries, such as fishing, weaving, spinning, etc. Practically the whole of the inhabitants in the congested districts consisted of persons holding land of from two to four statute acres, perfectly incapable of sustaining a family. The plots were usually planted with potatoes and oats, and the methods of cultivation



MAP OF IRELAND  
SHOWING THE PROPORTION OF CONGESTED DISTRICTS  
TO REST OF COUNTRY

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were extremely primitive; there was no rotation of crops, no adequate supply of manures, no proper system of drainage, while the breeds of live stock were worn out and of little value. The result was that the inhabitants were forced to depend very largely upon certain secondary sources of income of an uncertain and variable nature. Many "congests," as they are locally known, received occasional gifts from relatives in America, while weaving, knitting, and sewing formed other small subsidiary sources of income. The results of sea fishing helped families dwelling along the coast to eke out a scanty living, whilst those living inland depended largely upon the wages earned during some months of the year as migratory agricultural labourers in England or Scotland.

It is well perhaps for me to state here that the information respecting the earlier stages of the work of the Congested Districts Board is taken from *Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, edited by the late Mr. W. P. Coyne, of the Department of Agriculture. This book was originally intended to serve as an official handbook dealing with Ireland's chief economic resources, as a guide to those visiting the

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Glasgow International Exhibition of 1901, who were interested in the exhibits of the Irish Agricultural Department. Under the editorship of Mr. Coyne, the handbook grew into a portly and well-illustrated volume of over five hundred pages. It is needless to say that it is entirely non-political, but it is desirable to add that it is indispensable to any one who really desires to learn the truth about the economic conditions of Ireland.

To return to the condition of the “congests.” In a “good year” many of the inhabitants were little more than free from the dread of hunger, whilst a bad year, arising from the complete or partial failure of their crops, produced a condition of semi-starvation. In its first report the Board published four typical “Family Budgets,” showing the receipts and expenditures of different families in a congested district.

In No. 1, the budget of a family described as being “in comparatively good circumstances”—it reads like irony—the receipts amounted to £41, of which a quarter, or £10, represented the migratory earnings of the men, and a seventh, the children’s earnings as

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servants ; knitting, sewing, etc., accounted for another sixth. So that more than half the revenue came from other sources than the land. The expenditure amounted to £42 15s., whereof nearly half was laid out upon bread or flour, tea and Indian meal. The rent absorbed £1 10s., and church dues, etc., another sovereign. The home produce consumed by the family was valued at from £12 to £20.

Case No. 2 described "a family in ordinary circumstances," the receipts being derived from agriculture, fishing, and home industries. The receipts amounted to £27 4s., to which the sale of flannel or tweed, knitting, etc., contributed rather more than a quarter, and fish a little less than one-third. The expenditure amounted to £30 9s., of which £2 went for rent, and more than half of the total was spent on tea, sugar, meal, and flour. Home produce consumed by the family was valued at from £5 10s. to £10.

No. 3 is the budget of a family in "very poor circumstances," the receipts being derived from agriculture and fishing. The receipts amounted to £9 16s., of which nearly one-third was yielded by the sale of fish ; fish and eggs

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together producing half of the total. The expenditure was £10 19s., of which rent absorbed 30s., £4 went in meal, flour, groceries, etc., and the home produce consumed by the family was valued at from £12 to £17.

Last of all is the case of a family "in the poorest possible circumstances," the receipts being derived from agriculture and labour in the locality. Receipts, £8 3s., made up as follows : Eggs, £1 3s.; sixty days' labour at one shilling, £3; herding cattle, £4. The expenditure was : Rent £1; meal, £5 17s.; groceries, £4; and clothing, only 10s. The home products consumed by the family were valued at about £6.

"These facts and figures," to quote the authority, "speak eloquently for themselves, and show that in some congested districts at the time the Board was established the value of the products of some of the small holdings, together with the earnings and receipts of the family from every other source, did not exceed a total of £15 a year. Even in the less distressed portions of the congested districts the standard of living was low, the diet

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of the poorest section of the people being altogether vegetarian, with the exception of salt fish or bacon at times, which was used more as a relish than as an article of food. The houses, furniture and bedding were too often unhealthy, mean, and comfortless, and the clothing frequently ragged and scanty."

It is a terrible picture, representing a state of things which one is glad to know is gradually disappearing. There is one feature in these budgets to which attention ought to be called, because of the existence of an injurious legend very current in England, that rent is the cause of all the trouble. In the first case, it will be noticed that the rent amounts only to 30s., less than sevenpence a week, out of a total expenditure of £42 15s. In the second, rent stands for one-fifteenth part of the expenditure, and is ninepence halfpenny a week; in the third case, rent represents a seventh of the expenditure, and less than sevenpence a week. In the last case it absorbs one-tenth of the expenditure, and is fourpence halfpenny a week. So that, if rent were abolished to-morrow, in these typical

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congested holdings, twopence a day would be largely in excess of the gain to these impoverished people.

If the landlords of the west are to be blamed at all for this state of things it is for not having prohibited the practice of sub-division of the soil. The reports, however, of the Devon Commission, and of all its successors, as I have stated before, has proved how difficult a task was involved in this exercise of landlord rights. To have remedied the evil evictions must have taken place on a very large scale, and we know the use which would have been made, and has been made, of the levelling of huts on holdings incapable of furnishing a living. On many estates where the land is poor and the population dense, but where the people have been allowed to go on in their own way for many generations, they have so sub-divided the holdings from time to time that often enough the holding of one tenant does not consist of one or two, or even three, separate portions of land, but of many detached fields or plots within fields lying amongst similar fragments of other scattered holdings.

Let me turn once more to "Pat," and his testimony as an eye-witness :—

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"I will mention only an instance or two showing how production is hindered and life wasted. At Loghurragh, near Swinford, I counted as many as thirty-five different 'farms' on the side of a hill, and one of the 'farmers' told me I might count as many on the other side. I saw some 'stripes' that were only two ridges wide, that is, wide enough for eight rows of potato plants, and he told me some were only one ridge wide. The whole area is only seven Irish acres, divided into more than fifty holdings between eleven tenants, my guide said. That would leave between four and five different 'farms' to each of the eleven tenants within the seven acres. Of course, the plots are not fenced, which means that no plot can ever be grazed unless with a watcher to protect the adjoining plots. Nothing on wheels can go amongst these farms, and all the carrying has to be done on donkeys' backs, with a man following the donkey when he ought to be doing something more like a man's work. Such is the modern evolution from tribal or communistic tenure. But the case is worse with Paudheen Ua Conneilla (Anglice, Pat O'Connell, I

imagine), of Derrynea, Connemara, who showed me his trifle of tillage in seventeen patches, one 'field' being three yards wide and four yards long. Like the people of Loghurragh, he digged away, not realising that he competed with steam and motor ploughs in America."

The first thing that the Congested Districts Board had to do was to improve and enlarge holdings, buying out the landlords' interest, and reselling the extended holding to tenants. In the earlier stages this was a work of great difficulty, owing not to the refusal of the landlords to sell land necessary for the purpose, but to the obstinacy of many tenants who refused to give up their holdings, or to be migrated to spots which offered them more elbow-room. But fortunately good sense has spread, and up to the passage of the Land Act of 1903 the Board had bought, for purposes of enlargement and migration, 171,611 acres, and since the passage of that Act, 250,242 acres. Up to March 31, 1906, upwards of £76,000 had been spent in connection with the erection or improvement of dwelling-houses and the erection of out-offices, of

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which £28,000 represented the outlay in respect of the erection of houses and out-offices on rearranged holdings and new buildings provided for migrants, and the remainder was given to the tenants in cash or in value of materials from the Board stores. Up to the same date 200 dwelling-houses and 184 out-offices were built, while under various estate improvement and parish committee schemes in operation throughout the congested districts, the landlords, with some assistance from the Board, built and improved 1,372 dwelling-houses and erected 1,266 out-offices.

Excellent work is being done in encouraging and developing the sea fishing. The Board, for instance, owns a fleet of sixty-nine large-decked boats, worked on the share system, and money has been advanced to fishermen for what are called loan boats, which now number 115.

One of the most promising of all the small industries encouraged and assisted by the Congested Districts Board is the lace and crochet. Beginning on a very humble basis, the earnings of the Board's classes, exclusive of sales made to local buyers, were considerably over £20,000, and the Board adds :—

"The value of these classes in the poor districts is illustrated by the fact that the money earned last year by the girls in eight of the lace and crochet classes, held in seven electoral divisions of North-West Mayo, considerably exceeded the total Poor Law valuations of the lands in those divisions. And as that valuation generally exceeds the rents payable by the tenant farmers this addition to their incomes must have been a very appreciable benefit."

Here, again, I must point out the handicap imposed upon this and similar industries by the competition of the convents, a competition, as I have already pointed out, more likely to increase than to diminish.

Reference should be made to parish committee schemes for the encouragement of small landlords in improving their dwellings and farms. No applicant whose land and buildings exceed the Poor Law valuation of £7 is eligible for a grant. The grants are very small, ranging from £1 to £3, while the value of the work is from four to five times the amount of the grant. The Congested Districts

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Board is undoubtedly more popular with the poorer classes than the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. Nationalists will tell you that this greater popularity is due to the fact that the Board is more representative in character than the Department. But no one can go into a congested district and watch the operation of this most beneficial board without being convinced that the eleemosynary element is the chief factor in its popularity. Though the representative system is to be encouraged, it is not without its drawbacks. There is a good deal of very natural pressure put upon the Board by priests and others to secure grants for their own parishes, without much regard to the claims of other, and, it may be, more deserving districts. What, of course, is more important still, is that the old proverb, that what you can get for nothing is little valued, is more true of Ireland than of any other civilised country. In a great many districts where small holdings have been enlarged the tenant-owner often declines to fence his extended holding unless he is actually paid for doing so, and the experiment of fruit-growing, which promises great success, is often arrested by the refusal

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of the peasant proprietor to plant the trees gratuitously supplied to him. As a temporary expedient to meet a great emergency the Congested Districts Acts cannot be too highly praised ; but it must be borne in mind that it is only an expedient. Indeed, the Act constituting the Board expires automatically in 1911 unless Parliament thinks fit to renew it. The Board has shown the poorer inhabitants of Ireland how they can help themselves, and has granted them opportunities in the form of larger holdings and better houses to work out their own economic salvation. The initial start given to them to begin that work is amply justified on all political, social, and economic grounds. When this preliminary work has been accomplished throughout the Congested Districts most of the functions of the Board, save that of encouraging the small industries, will be no longer necessary or desirable.

Fortunately, a movement is growing, and has, indeed, reached a stage of sturdy development, which, if politics and unrest, and the blighting of confidence, do not intervene, holds out the brightest hope for the future of Ireland, I mean the Co-operative movement.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SELF-HELP

THE co-operative movement in Ireland deserves, for many reasons, more attention almost than any other economic phenomenon. It owes its development to the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, familiarly known as the I.A.O.S. This society was spontaneous and voluntary ; its services have been utilised at times by the Department of Agriculture, but it is independent and practically self-supporting. For some years after its birth, about 1890, the council was elected by subscribers to the fund. It has long since been put upon a representative basis, and the subscribers as such have only four nominees out of twenty. On the council are to be found eminent men of all shades of politics, and of all religious denominations working harmoniously together. There are Orangemen and Roman Catholics, Home Rulers and Unionists, and others representing

the cross-currents to which I have alluded elsewhere. Twenty-five years ago, any one who would have been bold enough to prophesy that co-operation between these antagonistic elements was possible would have been regarded as a lunatic. Its objects are not eleemosynary, as may be gathered by the fact that since it came into formal existence in 1894 the funds at its disposal for organisation purposes have not amounted to £50,000 ; it helps those who wish to help themselves, and they organise co-operation in a country better fitted for that system almost than any other in Europe. It is significant, from a political point of view, that its enemies are the politicians and the papers they control. The *Freeman's Journal* has been hostile to the movement from the very first, and the real leader of the Parliamentary party, Mr. John Dillon, has always regarded its work with great disfavour.

The idea started with Mr. (now Sir Horace) Plunkett, to whom the workers of Ireland owe far more than they do to any of the politicians. Sir Horace tells us himself, in *Ireland in the New Century*, the early history of the movement :—

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My own diary (he says) records attendance at fifty meetings before a single society had resulted therefrom. It was weary work for a long time. These gatherings were miserable affairs compared with those which greeted our political speakers. On one occasion the agricultural community was represented by the dispensary doctor, the schoolmaster, and the sergeant of police. Sometimes, in spite of copious advertising of the meeting, the prosaic nature of the objects had got abroad, and nobody met.

And he quotes the experience of Mr. Anderson, subsequently the secretary of the I.A.O.S., as follows :—

It was hard and thankless work. There was the apathy of the people and the active opposition of the Press and the politicians. It would be hard to say now whether the abuse of the Conservative *Cork Constitution* or that of the Nationalist *Eagle* of Skibbereen was the louder. We were “killing the calves,” we were “forcing the young women to emigrate,” we were “destroying the industry.” Mr. Plunkett

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was described as "a monster in human shape," and was adjured to "cease his hellish work." I was described as his "Man Friday" and as "Roughrider Anderson." Once, when I thought I had planted a creamery within the precincts of the town of Rathkeale, my co-operative apple-cart was upset by a local solicitor, who, having elicited the fact that our movement recognised neither political nor religious differences —that the Unionist-Protestant cow was as dear to us as the Nationalist-Catholic sister —gravely informed me that our programme would not suit Rathkeale. "Rathkeale," said he, pompously, "is a Nationalist town —Nationalist to the backbone—and every pound of butter made in this creamery must be made on Nationalist principles or it shan't be made at all." This sentiment was applauded loudly, and the proceedings terminated.

The organisation began very modestly by applying co-operation to the production of butter. At that time there were no Co-operative Creameries in existence, and the intro-

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duction of anything novel in Ireland is fraught with some danger to the promoter. During the years 1889 and 1890 there was only one society ; then the idea "caught on," with the result that to-day the number of these societies amounts to 860. In the course of their investigations in connection with the creameries, the society discovered that the farmers had no means of securing agricultural requirements of the latest description at a reasonable price. They knew absolutely nothing about artificial manures, their nature, or their proper use. "Pat" tells us that in County Mayo last spring he

Found that 300 tons of artificial manure had been delivered in recent weeks at one railway station, all under twenty-five per cent. pure, while they could have it forty-five per cent. pure for a proportionately less price, saving freight at 14s. 10d. per ton on nearly half of the whole quantity, not to mention other advantages. It was practically the same as carrying 150 tons of cobbles from Dublin Bay, and the farther from the seat of production the more is the cheap stuff preferred, with

railway rates higher than anywhere else I know. The shopkeepers, I am told, make more profit on the bad stuff than on the good stuff, and even the priests can hardly tell the people what may displease the shopkeeper.

Five or six parish societies were formed, in which farmers took five-shilling shares, with a shilling paid up, with the object of buying in bulk. The movement was nearly shipwrecked by the refusal of a combination of Irish manure manufacturers to supply co-operators. One firm, however, yielded, tempted by the offer of a large purchase, and since then there has been no difficulty. Encouraged by this success, the organisation turned their attention to other agricultural interests, and started societies all over the country, though the most important is still the Creameries, which are now turning out £1,500,000 worth of butter every year. The farmers who take shares in one of these creameries supply the milk, of which the butter fat is bought by weight, for which they are paid in accordance with the market price for butter. In the case of a profit on the year's working the

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dividend, limited to five per cent., is paid to the shareholders, and the balance is distributed *pro rata* among those who have supplied the milk. Perhaps no better work is being done on these lines than that of the Society of Poultry Keepers. This reaches the very poorest people in the congested districts. Owing to their poverty in the past, and their consequent indebtedness to small shopkeepers, it was a common thing in the west for cottars to pay for their tea, etc., in kind. On this credit system the shopkeeper charged an exorbitant price, and accepted in payment eggs at a ridiculously low rate. I have known of cases where tea, which could be bought in the bigger towns at 1s. 6d. a pound at the outside, sold in these little villages for half-a-crown a pound ; whereas eggs, selling in the cities at 1s. 6d. a dozen, were accepted in payment for the tea at the rate of 3d. and 4d. a dozen, so that a pound of tea, worth at the outside 1s. 6d., may cost the small holder ten dozen eggs. The Society took this matter in hand, and by collecting eggs and properly grading and packing them sold them in the London market at a rate exceeding that realised by the Danish Export Company by 1s. 6d. a

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hundred. The turnover last year on a capital of £300 was £20,000, and the trade of the coming year is expected to be treble or quadruple that amount. Equally valuable is the work done by the Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society, which purchases and resells feeding stuffs, seeds, artificial manures, implements, machinery, and all sorts of farming requirements. Considering the smallness of the average so-called "farm" in Ireland, these facilities furnished to farmers to combine to buy for common use improved machinery, for which none of them individually could afford to pay, are of incalculable value. Let me take one instance only. It is well known that by proper spraying at the right moment the potato disease can be arrested, if not altogether extinguished. Last year there was a partial failure of the crop, owing largely to the fact that after two or three years' immunity, the farmers had become slack in spraying the plants at the critical moment. But even when they are ready to take the proper precautions many of them are too poor to own a spraying machine, and the work is done in a rough and inefficient manner. By the existence of this agricultural society no one

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can plead inability to secure on the co-operative principle a proper system of spraying.

The latest statistics I was able to gather show that the number of societies amounts to 840, of which 330 were creameries, with a membership of over 40,000, and a paid-up and loan capital of over £200,000, doing a business of over a million and a quarter pounds. There were 150 agricultural societies, with a membership of 14,000, paid-up and loan capital of about £25,000, turning over in the year £85,000. The poultry societies were twenty-three in number, with a membership of 5,000 and a paid-up and loan capital of £4,500, with an estimated turnover of £40,000. The increase since the Department of Agriculture was founded in 1899 was over one hundred per cent. in the number of societies generally. The Agricultural banks, which I must next discuss at some length, have increased four hundred and fifty-two per cent.

The first experiment made of the system of co-operative credit, which had long been worked with marked success in Germany, was made at Doneraile, co. Cork, thirteen years ago. The system adopted was that known as

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the Raiffheisen, after the name of its founder, Herr F. W. Raiffheisen, who started the first Co-operative Credit Association at Hammersfield, in Germany, in 1849. The success was so great, and the principle was adopted so widely, that there are now over 2,169 of these societies in Germany alone. Those who care to go deeply into the question will find exceedingly interesting details in a bulletin published by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, and written by one of the best informed and most intellectual of Irishmen, Mr. H. de F. Montgomery, D.L. It was published in 1906, and can be procured from Alex. Thom and Co. (Ltd.), Abbey Street, Dublin. A general book, much to be commended on the subject, is that on *People's Banks*, by Henry W. Wolff, published by King and Son, of London. It is only necessary to state that the object of Raiffheisen was to enable peasant proprietors, who had two of the requisites of production, land and labour, to obtain the third, namely, capital. This end he secured by uniting the peasants as shareholders in loan associations regulated on the principle of unlimited liability. In these societies every

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member is equally, jointly, and severally liable for the debts of the association. This was the first safeguard of the bank, and the second was that money was lent for productive purposes only, and the borrower and his sureties were liable to be sued promptly if any other use was made of the loan except that specified in the application. Naturally the area covered by individual societies must be a small one, because the success of the system demands the personal knowledge of one another by all connected with the Society. The members of the committee get no salaries, and no dividends are paid, the profits going towards the formation of a reserve fund.

I need hardly say that there are other Co-operative Banks, such as that called Schulze-Delitzsch, from the birth-place and name of the founder, and the Banche Popolari, founded in Milan by Luigi Luzzatti and others. But, as the Raiffheisen is the one universally adopted in Ireland, it is the only one which at present concerns us. The *modus operandi* is very simple. A number of farmers, from thirty to a couple of hundred, join together and register themselves as a society under the Friendly

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Societies Acts, and, pledging their joint unlimited liability, borrow as much money as may be necessary for the purpose of a low rate of interest—in Ireland it is about three to four per cent.—and lend it out to the members at the rate of a penny per pound per month, or five per cent. per annum, which suffices to cover the very small expenses in working. Generally the locality supplies the initial capital, which is small. The Department of Agriculture and Congested Districts Boards have occasionally advanced sums of from £50 to £100 at three per cent., to start a society. But, in any case, the joint-stock banks will always lend in normal times at four per cent. the necessary funds, in the form of an overdraft. A small entrance-fee is charged for membership, either sixpence or a shilling, and outside the congested districts the sphere of a society is limited to a radius of two or three miles around the office. In the congested districts the area, owing to the barren nature of the soil, is a larger one. In the poorer districts of Ireland the amount that can be advanced is limited to £5; in others it amounts to as much as £15. The borrower obtains his loan for a period determined by the

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purpose to which it is destined. For instance, if he borrows with the object of buying manures, seeds, implements, young pigs, etc., the repayment is deferred for six, seven, eight, or nine months. On the other hand, if he buys a milch cow, he pays the loan off by monthly instalments as soon as he is getting his payment from the creamery. If a farmer borrows £5, and repays by monthly instalments, he only pays full interest on the first month. The second month he is charged on £4, and so on.

The working expenses so far are very low, being considerably under £1 per bank. Of course, this movement is still in its infancy. At the end of 1905 there were 230 such banks in existence, the loan capital amounted to close upon £40,000; the number of loans in 1905 was 7,453, the total amount granted was £43,700; the average loan was about £6, and a net profit of £530 odd was made in the year 1905, which went to swell the reserve, which stood at £1,717.

Ireland is pre-eminently the land of small holdings, something like half of the agricultural holdings being under fifteen acres, or

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about 300,000 farms ; and of this moiety half are under five acres. For the cultivators of these farms the large joint-stock banks are practically unavailable. The advance of small sums is not favoured by the regular bankers, and their system is necessarily far more rigid than that possible under the Raiffheisen system. The provincial offices of the joint-stock banks are situated in the country towns of some size, and are remote from the greater majority of the farmers who want a loan. I heard in the office of the *Irish Homestead* a typical case. A farmer who wished to borrow £5 from a bank, the nearest branch of which was twelve miles, had to take his sureties with him and pay them for their day's work, and find them food and drink. The bank deducted half-a-crown for the sum of £5 for three months, and there was the cost of the stamp. So that in the end, although the bank dealt perfectly fairly by him, he had to pay, owing to these incidental expenses, over forty per cent. upon the loan. Moreover, the inflexibility of bank rules makes it difficult for a man to borrow money from bankers for exactly the time that he may require it. There is the same objection to

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the Loan Fund societies, besides the fact that they charge a higher rate of interest. The net consequence has been that the bulk of small farmers who require temporary advances, in order to turn their farms to better account, have fallen into the hands of the gombeen man. The village usurer is the same all the world over; his one object is to extract as much money as he can out of his wretched victims, and to keep them perpetually in his clutches. With regard to the risks incidental to this Raiffheisen system, they are disposed of theoretically by the safeguards I have already cited, but more practically by the experience that, after nearly fifty years' working in Germany, the credit associations of the Raiffheisen type can boast that no one, either member or creditor, has lost by them a single penny. And so far as the experiment has been tried in Ireland, over a period of eleven years, the same boast can be safely made. What small losses—and they are very small—have been sustained by two or three societies, have not been due to defaults in payment by the borrowers, but to the fact that the bank could not lend all the capital with

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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which it started. In *Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, which was published when the system had only been working some six years, there are some interesting tributes to the moral as well as to the economic value of the system. I will cite one letter, written by the Rev. P. Kilkenny, P.P., of Claremorris :—

I have great pleasure in stating that, in my opinion, the objects of the philanthropic gentlemen who have promoted the establishment of agricultural banks in Ireland are fully realised in the case of the small bank of Murneen. The means at its disposal are no doubt slender, but still it is easy to point to cases where the loan received from the bank has produced twice or even thrice the amount borrowed. Cattle and pigs that would have been sold to the great loss of the borrower were enabled to be retained until their full value was realised. Greater even than the material advantages of the bank are the moral effects resulting from it in the district of Murneen, firstly, in the education the people are receiving in the true use of credit, and again in the gain for

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the country that can so easily be obtained from mutual co-operation. Heretofore the man who borrowed lost caste in the neighbourhood, was regarded as a ne'er-do-well, and fast hastening to join the class who are a burden on society. Now the people are learning that it is honourable, when necessary, to borrow for the honest purpose of improving one's position and ascending higher the ladder of industrial prosperity. From the success that has attended the working of this little experiment in such a remote district, one is forced to wish that banks were multiplied in the country, and that this influence for good may be more widely extended.

The following table, taken from the work I have quoted, may be regarded as typical of these banks. The table represents the sums borrowed by different persons, the purpose and length of time for which the loan was required, and the profits. The term profit as here used means the gross return, exclusive, of course, of the amount of the loan :—

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Amount borrowed. £ s. d.	Time. Months.	Purpose.	Length required. Months.	Profit. £ s. d.
2 0 0 .	10 .	2 Bonhams .	8½ .	9 5 0
2 0 0 .	10 .	2 " .	10 .	6 5 0
5 0 0 .	7 .	3 Calves .	7 .	10 5 0
5 0 0 .	12 .	2 "	9 .	7 0 0
1 0 0 .	11 .	2 Bonhams .	11 .	7 15 0
1 0 0 .	10 .	1 "	10 .	4 0 0
1 10 0 .	10 .	2 "	10 .	7 2 6
2 0 0 .	10 .	2 "	10 .	7 0 0
<hr/>				
19 10 0				58 12 6

The light in which the “politicians” regard movements for the material improvement of the people can be learnt from a letter signed by Mr. J. E. Redmond, the titular leader of the party, and addressed to the notorious Patrick Ford, the editor of the *Irish World*, of New York. It was apparently provoked by the appearance of Sir Horace Plunkett’s book, *Ireland in the New Century*. The date of the letter, written from New York, is October 4, 1904:—

MY DEAR MR. FORD,

I am anxious, before leaving for home, to say a word of warning with reference to an insidious attempt which I find is being made in America by officials and agents of the British Government to divert the minds of the friends of Ireland from the national movement,

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under the pretence of promoting an industrial revival in Ireland.

Promotion of Irish industries is so praiseworthy an object that I am not surprised that some of our people in America have been deceived in this matter. I myself, indeed, at one time, entertained some belief in the good intentions of Sir Horace Plunkett and his friends, but recent events have entirely undeceived me ; and Sir Horace Plunkett's recent book, full as it is of undisguised contempt for the Irish race, makes it plain to me that the real object of the movement in question is to undermine the National party and divert the minds of our people from Home Rule, which is the only thing which can ever lead to a real revival of Irish industry.

The men who are conducting this movement are of the most part avowed anti-Home Rulers, and many of them salaried officials of the British Government. I am informed that an agent of theirs is about to visit America for the purpose of still further pushing the movement, and I feel it my duty to issue this word of warning to prevent our friends here from being deceived as to the real meaning of this movement.

Believe me, very truly yours,

JOHN E. REDMOND.

## CHAPTER IX

### EDUCATION

FEW students of the conditions of Ireland can fail to realise that the only solution of the Irish problem is to be found in the intellectual emancipation of the race. This emancipation is not inconsistent either with the maintenance of the Union or the concession of autonomy. For whether she remains a portion of the United Kingdom or breaks away as an independent Republic, Ireland will never secure that measure of prosperity to which the vigour and talents of her race entitle her, unless the intellects of her children are emancipated from blind devotion to obsolete ideals and antiquated systems of thought, and to brooding over historic grievances. Once more I must repeat that these words have no reference to the legitimate spiritual authority of the priesthood or to the tenets of any particular creed. The mainspring of all movements of emancipation is education. And,

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putting aside for a moment the splendid foundation of Trinity College, the creation of Queen Elizabeth, and the Queen's Colleges, which owed their existence to Sir Robert Peel, the whole system of education in Ireland is very unsatisfactory. Those interested in the historic side of the problem will find an excellent article in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1898, Vol. 187, No. 383, to which I am indebted for much useful information, and still more valuable suggestions. Historically, an earlier recognition of the duties of the State towards primary education was manifested in Ireland than in England. In 1806 the Hibernian Association had been founded to promote the education of the poor, and in 1811 the well-known Kildare Place Society was inaugurated for the same purpose, and to it in 1814 Parliament made grants. The regulations were based upon the recommendation of a Commission appointed in 1806, which occupied no less than six years in coming to a conclusion. In their final report the Commissioners suggested "a general plan of education for the lower classes, keeping clear of all interference with the religious tenets of any, and thereby inducing the whole to receive

education as one body, under one and the same system, and in the same establishment."

It is interesting to notice at the present day that the rock upon which the plan split was an injunction much in favour with the Nonconformists of to-day, to enforce the reading of the Bible without note or comment, as an essential part of the system. At first there was not much opposition on the part of the hierarchy, but gradually the bishops withdrew the Catholic children from the schools. In 1828 a new scheme was adopted, for "the purpose of carrying into effect the combined literary and separate religious education of children in the schools aided by the State." From 1828 to 1852 the system worked admirably, Protestant archbishops and Roman Catholic archbishops sitting together on the same board and acting with complete harmony. That, as Mr. Gladstone would have said, was one of the golden moments of Ireland. This period of calm did not, however, endure; nor can the breakdown of this satisfactory system be connected in any way with "English rule" or Castle administration, or with the Act of Union. When Archbishop Murray died in 1852 Ultramontanism had

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established itself strongly at the Vatican, and Dr. Cullen, not yet Cardinal, who became archbishop, was in the keenest sympathy with the predominant spirit in Rome. The result was continual disputes, which usually ended by the surrender of the State to the Church. So that to-day we have, as the Edinburgh Reviewer puts it, "a system which still remains in theory a mixed system, but in practice has grown to be all but completely denominational." And he goes on to state :—

It appears that of 8,606 National schools in operation on December 31, 1896, with a roll of 815,248 pupils, 5,248 schools, with a roll of 501,577 pupils, were attended solely by Roman Catholics or solely by Protestants. Thus of the total number on the rolls 62·2 per cent. were in schools attended solely by Roman Catholics or solely by Protestants, and only 37·8 per cent. were in schools attended by Roman Catholic and Protestant pupils.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The last returns are as follows :—

There are 823 so-called mixed schools under Protestant teachers, of which only 8·7 Roman Catholic pupils attend. We have under Roman Catholic teachers 1,907 of the same

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Under this system, which on general lines is unsatisfactory, primary education in Ireland has retrograded rather than progressed. That is by no means all. Taking one in five of the whole population as about the ratio of those who should be in average attendance, Great Britain should have an average attendance of 6,990,000, and Ireland should have an attendance of 873,000. The number in Great Britain actually in attendance is about six millions, in Ireland it is only half a million.

Whereas in England there is one school to 254 pupils in average attendance, and in Scotland one for 214, in Ireland there is a school for every 57 children in average attendance. While Scotland has 3,244 schools to meet the requirements of 700,000 children in average attendance, Ireland requires 8,659 for an average attendance of 500,500. A glance at these startling statistics will explain the inferiority of Irish primary education as compared with that of England and Scotland. Nor do these

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class of schools attended only by 5·3 Protestant pupils. And in the whole of Ireland there are only thirty-two schools under Roman Catholic and Protestant teachers conjointly.

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statistics disclose the whole of the truth. The attendance in the big towns is fairly satisfactory. If they were left out of account, the average attendance would be far lower than it is. During the summer months the children of migratory labourers hardly attend at all. The fathers are working in England, the mothers look after the holding, and the children have to guard the home and poultry yard. And often in the west you will see, between the end of May and October, less than a dozen children in a school. In Connaught there are on the rolls 120,000 children, and according to population, there should be half as many again. But of these only 71,600 attend with anything like regularity. It is impossible, in these circumstances, to secure efficient teachers or to hold out any inducement to them to take interest in their work. Most of the teachers in the west have small holdings, to which they devote more time and attention than they do to the dozen or two of children committed to their charge. If there were deducted from these averages the statistics of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterians, Methodists, and others, the result would appear more lamentable than it

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actually does. As I have already pointed out, Ireland started on a course of primary education earlier than England, and so long as the mixed schools were continued the system of elementary education was by no means bad. But the policy inaugurated by Cardinal Cullen set education on the downward grade. Not only does every religious denomination demand a school for its own pupils—even sub-denominations make this claim—but the Roman Catholic Church, acting in accordance with rules which it is not my business to question, disapproves of mixed education even in the country districts. The consequence is that there are separate schools for boys and for girls, and with education thus divided and sub-divided it is impossible to secure even moderately fair results. This insistence upon the separate teaching of boys and girls even in country schools, reminds me of the growing austerity of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. It is a depressing sight to witness lads and lasses in the west walking on opposite sides of the road and incurring the ban of the priest if they talk to one another. And this increasing austerity is one of the reasons why the priest-

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hood views with suspicion the growth of the Gaelic League, which comprises amongst its methods of Gaelicising Ireland the revival of the old historic games and dances.

Compulsory education, if the Hibernicism may be pardoned, is optional ; that is to say, the local authorities can enforce attendance or not, as they think fit, and in most of the schools in districts where education is specially needed, the authorities find it unpopular to exercise compulsion. It is true that absolute illiteracy is declining, as is evidenced by the diminution of the number of adults who are unable to sign their names to the marriage register. In the year 1864 only sixty-one in every 100 men and fifty in every 100 women wrote their names ; in 1895 the figures were 83·0 men and 84·3 women ; while in 1905 90·0 per cent. of the men and 92·4 of the women signed the register. In England and Wales the latest figures are 99·84 men and 99·8 women.

The standard of elementary education is deplorably low, and it is not, at its best, adapted to the needs of the Irish people. Ireland, as one has to point out in considering

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every social and political problem, is an agricultural country, but the education given to the pupils is mostly of a kind to fit them for city and commercial life. It may be admitted that the Irish have a distinct grievance in the abolition, by Radical economists, of a scheme whereby for some years children in the elementary schools and in the workhouse schools received instruction in gardening, husbandry, and the like.

The following information I have derived from a letter addressed by the late Sir Patrick Keenan, K.C.M.G., Resident Commissioner of National Education, to Lord Spencer, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in 1883. After recounting the steps which had been taken by a committee of the Ulster gentry at a place called Templemoyle, in county Londonderry, in 1826, to educate the sons of farmers in agricultural science, he goes on to tell the story of the Glasnevin model farm. "The idea," he says, "of engrafting agricultural instruction upon the ordinary curriculum of our elementary schools was accepted in the country with positive enthusiasm. Landlords and others, who, on religious and political grounds, hated

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the national system, turned invariably to this feature of the operation of the Board with the greatest favour."

The Devon Commission in 1843 hailed the project, and recommended the establishment of schools for agricultural instruction throughout the country. Agricultural societies and leading public men expressed their approval of the proposals with unstinted cordiality. But even at so early a period as 1848—"the heyday of Cobdenism"—an adverse criticism from so influential a quarter as the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Miscellaneous Expenditure, was communicated to the Commission. This Committee expressed grave doubts as to the policy of engrafting an agricultural department upon a national system of primary education, and a sort of compromise was effected. The subsequent history of the movement is thus described by Sir Patrick Keenan :—

But an agitation, originated by the Liverpool Financial Reform Association about a quarter of a century ago, arose against our whole agricultural system. This association

disputed the right of the State to train up farmers and stewards at the public cost. In Parliament the Association, especially amongst advanced Free Traders, had many influential exponents. The Government, from time to time, was harassed in its defence of the system. Successive Chief Secretaries, in deference to the views of Parliament, barely tolerated its continuance. Mr. Herbert, Mr. Cardwell, and Sir Robert Peel were absolutely hostile to it. Mr. Cardwell especially directed his hostility to the countenance given by the Board to agricultural instruction in the workhouse schools at the expense of Parliament, and distinct from its support from the rates, and strongly and successfully urged the Board to abandon this branch of their agricultural system.

This was in 1862. The workhouse experiment thus lasted only twelve years. The greatest number of workhouse schools having agricultural departments attached in any one year during the twelve years of the experiment was seventy-nine. The Board, recognising this great change in Parliamentary

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opinion, held their hands, and determined not to add to the number of their farms. They even tried to avert hostility to the system by renting nine of the existing farms to the agriculturists in charge of them, with a view of reducing the cost of the agricultural department. But this latter experiment proved to be a great embarrassment to the administration, and had to be abandoned. In 1870 the Royal Commission upon Primary Education, presided over by Lord Powis, recommended :—

“That the position of provincial and district model agricultural schools should be revised by the Commissioners of National Education, and that their number should be reduced.”

The old Templemoyle School, to which I referred in my opening remarks, died out in 1866. In the beginning of 1872 the agricultural department was at a low ebb in popular favour. It had been proscribed by Chief Secretary after Chief Secretary, and it at all times had to encounter the fiercest hostility of the Treasury, who regarded it as

a baneful excrescence upon a primary system of education.

As for intermediary education, it is not too much to say that the whole thing is a farce. The Board of Education has no powers of inspection, and cannot ascertain where, how, and when the candidates for examination are prepared. The salaries of the teachers are ridiculously low, and the posts have practically been absorbed by the priests, to whom the remuneration is a welcome addition to their relatively small emoluments. I heard a great many complaints in different parts of Ireland of the unsatisfactory methods of conducting examinations, but, as I could secure no direct evidence, it is not a point which I wish to press.

If the training and examination of these intermediate pupils were a reality, there would be little to be said against the curriculum. "No student shall obtain a pass unless he pass in at least two of the following : Greek, Latin, English, mathematics, a modern language, or else in one of the foregoing, together with any other two subjects in the programme. In each subject, according to their answering,

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students may be awarded : (1) a pass ; (2) a pass with honours. To pass in any subject a student must obtain twenty-five per cent. of the marks assigned to the pass part of the subject, and to gain honours fifty per cent. of the total marks assigned to the subject must be obtained." It is now proposed to add Gaelic to the list of subjects, in which case a pass would be obtained for a very modest acquaintance with the Gaelic the English students already speak and in which they could be easily crammed.

## CHAPTER X

### HIGHER EDUCATION

IT is instructive to examine the state of the Queen's Colleges found by Sir Robert Peel in 1849, with the hope of attracting Roman Catholics and Protestants to a common seminary of higher education, which should be undenominational and unsectarian. Whether this scheme ever contained within itself the germs of a great success cannot now be answered; for, within three years of the opening of the colleges, the ultramontane ascendancy established, as I have pointed out before, by Cardinal Cullen blighted its prospects so far as it offered a solution of the problem of higher education for Catholics. At the famous Synod of Thurles these colleges were denounced by the Catholic hierarchy, though by a very small majority, as "Godless." Most excellent work has been done by the Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Galway, and Cork. But owing to the influence and pressure of the hierarchy the number of Catholics taking advantage of the

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colleges is disappointingly small. Considerably more Roman Catholics entered in the first years of the establishment of them than are to be found to-day amongst the matriculated and non-matriculated students. Out of 761 students attending the Queen's Colleges in the session of 1905-06 only 246 were Roman Catholics, or forty less than the Presbyterians, and not quite a hundred more than members of the Church of Ireland. Trinity College, Dublin, to which Irish Churchmen mostly flock, though it has no religious tests of any sort, does not give any particulars of the religious beliefs of its students, but it is safe to say that the average number of the Roman Catholics does not amount to more than ten per cent. of the whole number. Too much attention cannot be given to the facts stated above. It cannot be laid to the charge of "English rule" that Roman Catholic Irishmen lack that higher education enjoyed by Englishmen and Scots of corresponding position. Personally, I have always favoured the establishment of a purely Roman Catholic university for Ireland; but there are difficulties, and very substantial difficulties, which do not altogether arise out of the

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opposition of Ulster, or the repugnance which the British Nonconformists might show to putting “Rome upon the rates.”

I talked during the course of my stay in Ireland with many intelligent and liberal-minded Protestants, who declared that they would not object to the establishment of a Catholic University under a governing body, in which Catholic laymen should have a majority over the bishops, if the hierarchy would consent to the mixed education of lay students and of students destined for the priesthood. To this, however, the hierarchy will never consent. They have no dislike of their future priests attending college and obtaining a degree, but they insist that the last four years of his education shall be devoted to the study of theology and the training necessary for his ultimate calling. The chief difficulty of all is to be found in the objection the hierarchy has always entertained, and still entertains, to the education of their young men in any institution which Oxford or Cambridge or Trinity College, Dublin, would regard as a university at all. It would seem that Mr. Bryce’s bill, if it ever sees daylight, will be drawn upon much the same lines as

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those by following which Mr. Gladstone came to indescribable grief in 1873. The late Duke of Argyll, a member of Mr. Gladstone's Government of that time, wrote to Lord Salisbury in 1889 :—

“ In that year, 1873,” he said, “ we followed our distinguished leader into a celebrated mess. We produced a scheme which was in itself inherently absurd. We admitted that it was impossible to combine Catholics and non-Catholics in higher university education in Ireland, if that higher education was to be what it had always been elsewhere over the civilised world. But we suggested that it might be lopped, truncated, and maimed. Our suggestion was that in Ireland that would still be higher education, although it might be wanting both in philosophy and history. As Sir Lyon Playfair (afterwards Lord Playfair) tersely put it, ‘in a country which had given birth to Bishop Berkeley philosophy was to be dropped out of academic teaching, and in the native land of Edmund Burke modern history was to suffer the same fate.’ ”

It was with regard to this measure that Mr. Disraeli said in the House of Commons :—

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This is essentially a material age; the opinions which are now afloat, which have often been afloat before, and which have died away, as I have no doubt these will die in due time, are opposed, in my opinion, to all those sound convictions which the proper study of moral and mental philosophy has long established. But that such a proposition should be made in the land which has produced Berkeley and Hutchinson makes it still more surprising.

This inherent difficulty may be gathered from evidence given before the late Royal Commission in Dublin by Dr. Delany, S.J., President of University College, Dublin. Question and answer No. 4,494 :—

In the subject of philosophy our students are taught first, of course, our own system, the Catholic philosophy.

Question : That is, according to St. Thomas ? (Aquinas).

Answer : According to St. Thomas, yes ; but not necessarily limited to St. Thomas, inasmuch as there have been other great Catholic philosophers besides St. Thomas—but the teaching may be described as on the

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lines of St. Thomas; but in order that the students may be truly instructed in philosophy we think it necessary that those who take up that study should know the whole history of philosophy and also the various schools of philosophy, in order to protect them against the very deadly danger of becoming sceptics. . . . In order to show them the danger of those false systems, and to give the training enabling them to see the want of logic and the fallacy underlying them, we first give them a solid logical training in Catholic scholastic philosophy, and then set before them for refutation the fallacies of these sceptical schemes of philosophy out of the books of the authors themselves, not out of compendiums prepared to suit our own views. . . . There is one thing we should not tolerate. We should not tolerate the teaching of Haeckel in biology, but we should not tolerate it merely on the ground of its being against the Christian faith, but because we hold it to be absolutely and totally unscientific, and on the ground that such training would be bad for the man, not merely because it

would undermine his faith, but because it would give him a looseness of reasoning which would injure his intellectual capacity in other respects. . . . In the same way I would not allow a man to teach immoral doctrines, not because I am a Catholic, but because I am a man. I would not allow him to do it. These are the identical limitations which occur wherever there is the Christian faith, wherever there is a true sense, to my notion, of morality, quite independent of any faith.

Dr. Delany, one of the ablest men in Ireland, must himself realise that there can be no freedom in philosophic thought or discussion, if the Vatican reserves the right to decide what is "totally unscientific" or "immoral," and forbids systems of philosophy thus arbitrarily condemned to be taught in a university. It was astute on the part of Dr. Delany to select Haeckel as his example; but he must know, none better, that Bentham and Mill, Herbert Spencer and Huxley, Darwin and Wallace, to mention only English thinkers and scientists, would be banned in any Catholic College or

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University, especially as most, if not all, of these distinguished writers are on the Index Expurgatorius.

In spite, however, of the palpable difficulties which would attend the foundation of a purely Catholic University on such lines as would satisfy the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, the attempt, I think, ought to be made. Ireland already possesses a one-college university in Trinity, which is free to all, without distinction of race or creed. In point of fact, the governing body of Trinity College anticipated the English Universities in opening the institution to all comers. It is no fault of the College, or of its regulations, that Roman Catholics did not flock there for the higher education. It is largely the historical fact—and historical grievances count for far too much in Ireland—that the university was founded by Elizabeth, which renders it obnoxious to the Roman Catholic Hierarchy. In truth, Roman Catholics whose parents do not yield to priestly influence go to Trinity, where every post and honour is accessible to them, with the exception of positions connected with the divinity school. More than that, it is known that the authorities

were prepared to set aside a chapel for Roman Catholic students, where the services should have been conducted by priests of their own faith. I believe that a reasonable condition was attached to this offer, namely, that the ban should be withdrawn from the Queen's Colleges. More than thirty years ago overtures were made to the hierarchy by the Board of Governors to create a Roman Catholic divinity school, which would hold the same place in the college as the divinity school of the Church of Ireland. These overtures were rejected by Cardinal Cullen, and a similar fate awaited proposals made to Cardinal Logue as late as 1901. It is clear, therefore, that Trinity College has done all that lay in its power to attract Roman Catholics to its bosom, short of handing over the absolute control of its affairs to a permanent Catholic majority.

In a country in which religious creeds are so sharply divided from one another, and where sectarian passion is apt to run high, the liberality and broadmindedness displayed by Trinity College are most welcome and remarkable phenomena. No impartial man can lay the blame for the acknowledged inefficiency of

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the higher education of the Catholics upon that institution. And indeed the Commissioners in their last report paid the highest possible tribute to its generosity. Nothing, therefore, could be more odiously unjust than to punish Trinity College for the existence of grievances it has done nothing to create, but which it has attempted to remedy by every means in its power. The one cry raised by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, who profess to be indifferent to the exact method by which their grievances are to be remedied, is : "Equality." "Our university, or our college," they say, "must be on equality with T. C. D." But the status of a great centre of higher education cannot be determined by Act of Parliament, or by any other test than its own merits and the success of its work. And according to the scheme adumbrated by Mr. Bryce, the equality sought by the Roman Catholics is to be attained not by levelling up but by levelling down. The proposal is that Trinity's ancient charter, which it received from Queen Elizabeth, should be cancelled, and its power of granting degrees in virtue of its identity with the Dublin University should be

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taken away. Note the injustice of this proposal. So high is the value attaching to a degree conferred by Trinity College that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge accept them as entitling the bearer to proceed without examination to a corresponding degree in these universities. Would Oxford and Cambridge take the same view of the merit of these degrees were they conferred by a university in which, at most, Trinity would be *prima inter pares*? A new university is to be created which will assume the title of Dublin University, always associated with Trinity, and will be composed of the Queen's Colleges in Belfast and Cork, and a new Roman Catholic College in Dublin, all of which will be on an equal footing with Trinity College. Maynooth, Queen's College, Galway, and Magee College, Londonderry, are to be affiliated to this university. But the chief grievance lies in the fact that there will be a new governing body, partly nominated by the Crown, and partly elected by the constituent colleges, and by the general body of graduates. This body will conduct the university examinations, confer degrees, and appoint professors. In addition to this,

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the present Royal University is to cease to exist, and the graduates on the register of that university are to be transferred by special Act to the University of Dublin. It may be pointed out that it was the undergraduates of this Royal University who, in 1905, at the ceremony of conferring degrees, chose to resent the singing of the National Anthem and "ragged" the organist.

It is not only conceivable, but very probable, that a governing body so composed would soon contain a majority of Catholics ; and the ultimate consequence would be that the standard now necessary to acquire a degree at Trinity College, Dublin, would be altered—I will not say lowered—to meet the demands of a system of education commanding itself to the hierarchy. In that case, the value of the Dublin University degree would be debased, and a young man of talent, finding that his degree was of no value in his professional career, would abstain from joining Dublin University and go elsewhere, or would abandon the idea of profiting by higher education at all.

Nor does this exhaust the evils of the system foreshadowed by Mr. Bryce. In the nature

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of things, religious differences would be represented on the governing body, and we are only too familiar with the demoralising effect of sectarian squabbles upon the development of education from top to bottom. By uniting Trinity College against its will with the three other colleges we should be actually putting a premium upon sectarian dissensions in a place where they are most dangerous and deplorable in results. Such a union would not be a love match, or even a *mariage de convenance*—it would simply be a marriage of coercion. When we consider how deplorably backward Ireland is in the matter of education, it is little less than a crime to destroy the one institution which has earned distinction and honour for Ireland throughout the civilised world in order to set up an inferior body, whose degrees would carry little recommendation. And it is so unnecessary. If the Government has not the courage to grasp the problem, and create a Catholic University with all the essential requirements to enable it, not to be the equal of Trinity College, but to become its equal, and even its superior, by dint of work and merit, then it is far better to leave the matter

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alone and to supplement and endow other Catholic colleges. It is the hierarchy which lays it down as fundamental that mixed education is inconsistent with the doctrines of the Church. What reason is there to expect that mixed education will, from a Catholic point of view, be more satisfactory in a university than in a college? Mr. Bryce urged as one of the attractions of his scheme that it would enable Roman Catholics and Protestants to mix together on terms of equality. Yet this is the very result the hierarchy seeks to avoid.

The proposed scheme for putting a strictly Catholic and a Protestant college under the same governing body would be tantamount to setting up a temperance hotel on one side the street and a fully-licensed hotel on the other, and entrusting the control of both to a body composed of teetotalers and of brewers. Two rival universities, each standing on its own basis, may well co-exist, because the rivalry is apt to act as a stimulus both to the teachers and the taught. Oxford profits by the competition of Cambridge, and Cambridge would lose a good deal of its energy if Oxford were wiped out of existence. What would happen if these

two competing universities were placed under the joint control of a single governing body? Yet, as between Oxford and Cambridge, there are none of those fundamental differences of belief which are found to be the chief factor in the Irish University problem.

Last year the Rev. Dr. Hogan, Canon of Killaloe, and Professor at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, wrote an extremely able and vigorous pamphlet on the subject of *Irish Catholics and Trinity College*. His object was to demonstrate from the Roman Catholic point of view the unsuitability of Trinity as a place of education for young Catholics. I am not concerned to deal with his alternatives, but I would call the attention of those who think that yoking a Roman Catholic college to Trinity College would solve the problem, to study this admirable pamphlet, which costs two shillings. Its sole aim and object is to prove that the system of education which suits Protestants altogether fails to meet the requirements of Roman Catholics.

To all those (he says) who suggest that Trinity College should be invaded, stormed,

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and captured, I respectfully submit that the struggle would be so protracted, the attack so bitterly contested, the odds against us so overwhelming, that even were a lodgment of some kind ultimately effected in the fortress, our soldiers would come out of the engagement so demoralised, that victory would be scarcely less fatal than defeat. Thirty or forty years of instruction by Protestant teachers, slowly, imperceptibly, patiently, perhaps in many cases unconsciously, infusing into their young disciples an anti-Catholic, or even an un-Catholic spirit, would do more harm to Catholic faith in Ireland, in my humble opinion, than thirty years of the penal code.

To those, on the other hand, who propose that such a change should be effected in the constitution, governing powers, and *personnel* of Trinity College as would bring it into harmony with national requirements, I say that, as things appear to me, their project would be met by so much opposition on both sides, and would give rise to such prolonged and acrimonious controversy, that they might as well spare themselves the trouble of urging

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it. The Protestantism of Trinity College is of such long growth; its roots go so deep into the past; its spirit so pervades the establishment in all its parts; and former efforts to bring the place into harmony with national needs have been so successfully baffled, that Catholics would only be wasting their energies in discussing plans for its transformation.

And to support his thesis Dr. Hogan, with perfect courtesy, but merciless analysis, criticises the published works of the Provost, the Vice-Provost, and all the principal professors of Trinity College, Dublin, showing how one and all treat the subjects with which they have to deal in a spirit most distasteful to Catholics. He quotes, very naturally, from Cardinal Newman's *Idea of a University*, in which, after referring to the errors that result from a false philosophy of history :—

And so (says Newman) of the other sciences; just as comparative anatomy, political economy, and the philosophy of history, may be and are turned against

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religion by being taken by themselves, as I have been showing, so a little (like?) mistake may befall any other. Grammar, for instance, at first sight does not appear to admit of perversion, yet Horne Tooke made it the medium of his peculiar scepticism. Law would seem to have enough to do with its own clients and their affairs; and yet Mr. Bentham made a treatise on Judicial Proofs a covert attack on the miracles of Revelation. And in like manner physiology may deny moral evil and human responsibility; geology may deny Moses; and logic may deny the Holy Trinity; and other sciences rising into notice are or will be victims of similar abuse.

Dr. Hogan is particularly severe, still from the Catholic point of view, upon Professor Bury and his appreciation of Gibbon, who, it is needless to say, is on the Index, and of Professor Dowden he speaks as follows :—

I do not for a moment deny Professor Dowden's wide culture, his acute critical spirit in literary history, the charm of ex-

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pression that often lights up the nebulous haze of his style. He is an admirable professor for a Protestant institution; the Erasmus Smith governors can have perfect confidence in him as a professor of oratory; but I think it is neither fit nor decent that he should be offered to Catholics to guide them through the mazes of English literature or to form their oratorical taste.

Of course, it is unnecessary for me to say that I have no sympathy with these criticisms, but, on the other hand, Dr. Hogan is quite entitled to offer them for the purposes of his argument. What I wish thinking people to ask themselves is: What sort of curriculum, what course of studies, would be laid down by a board composed of men like Professor Bury on the one side and Dr. Hogan on the other? How could an examiner, or a group of examiners, fairly appraise answers given in examination by a set of youths trained in the spirit of Professor Bury, and of another set educated in the spirit of Dr. Hogan's criticism? The real effect of this most interesting pamphlet is to demonstrate the impossibility of combining a

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Catholic and a non-Catholic college under the same governing body.

"We do not grudge," says Dr. Hogan, "the Protestants of Ireland all the advantages of education, all the blessings of a great and powerful school. . . . Let them keep Trinity College in the main and in its essential features for themselves, without at the same time closing its doors to the nation which owns it. Let Catholics do likewise in a college equally well endowed. Let the rulers, teachers, and students of both one and the other live in peace, in mutual respect and forbearance, and good fellowship. Let the young Irishmen coming from these two schools meet at sports and games and pastimes, and in the circles of social enjoyment, and let them afterwards contend honourably and amicably in the arena of professional and public life. Thus there will be no soreness, no resentment, no grievance on one side or the other."

Perhaps the most conclusive argument that can be adduced against this attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable is to be found in the following

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words, which are as true of honourable Catholics as they are of the Protestants to whom Dr. Hogan applies them :—

“The junior Fellows,” he says, “I have no doubt are honourable men. They would do nothing their conscience would not justify ; but their conscience is not ours. In their intellectual tendencies there is nothing that I know of to distinguish them from their seniors and from the other professors of the establishment. They are Protestants in their profession and would be Protestants in their teaching, wherever religion came in their way. They would not consciously do an injustice as between candidates, but I have no exact idea of what they would regard as an injustice, and I have a pretty clear idea that there might be some difficulty in coming to an agreement as to the abstract meaning of the term.”

Could anything demonstrate more clearly the impossibility of establishing a governing body composed, as it must be, of men who hold the views of Dr. Hogan, and of men who hold the views he criticises ?

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This brings me back to my original contention, that, difficult and unpromising as the task may be, the only solution of this urgent problem is the establishment of a Roman Catholic university managed by Roman Catholics on Roman Catholic lines.

## CHAPTER XI

### CONCLUSION

THE task I set myself has now been accomplished to the best of my ability.

It is impossible for any one not personally familiar with Ireland to form any reasonable judgment upon its political future unless he is acquainted with the social and economic factors of to-day. I have, therefore, travelled, as rapidly as seemed to me consistent with my object, over many fields. Much more ground might easily have been covered were it not that the reader wearies of over-much detail, and is more than satisfied with a bird's-eye view. It is only in the light of such facts and figures as I have endeavoured to set forth succinctly that the political situation in Ireland can be judged. It must always be remembered, as I have before pointed out, that "politics" have two separate and distinct meanings for Irishmen. To the politicians the word implies great constitutional changes in the relations between Ireland and the rest

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of the United Kingdom. To the peasants, upon whom politicians rely for support, politics is a matter of pounds, shillings and pence, and of satisfying the land hunger. I asked every Nationalist I met, north, west, and south, what he understood by Home Rule. The invariable reply was, of course, "A Parliament of our own, with a Government responsible to it." But when I pressed the further query, "What do you want this Parliament and Government to do?" I could get no definite answer, though most of those whom I interrogated talked freely and openly about the matters dealt with in previous chapters. The inability to obtain any general opinion as to what should be the work of an Irish Parliament must be attributed to the fact that the majority, at least, had themselves no definite views on the subject. When I put the same question to a distinguished and most "patriotic" prelate, the only answer I obtained was: "There are certain national aspirations which cannot be put into words." I pointed out that it would puzzle a Parliamentary draughtsman to devise a bill to grant to Ireland the satisfaction of certain national aspirations which it

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was impossible to put into words. Really there is much truth in the saying of the late Dean Dickinson, of Dublin, that "the Irish do not know what they want, and will not be happy until they get it."

For my own part, I do not believe that there is, amongst the peasants who constitute the large majority of the Irish people, any passionate demand for Home Rule as such. And, indeed, this conviction is strengthened by the fact mentioned in an earlier chapter, that Home Rule, or Repeal by themselves, never excited more than a spasmodic enthusiasm. The historic phrase of Fintan Lalor, already quoted, that Repeal would not move unless it was attached to some other question, such as the agrarian problem, which would drag it along as a locomotive drags trucks, and the success which attended its translation into action, seem to be conclusive.

The Irish of the peasant class rarely think for themselves. In matters spiritual they take their beliefs from their spiritual guides, and in matters political from those who have won their support by material promises which could not be redeemed under any form of government.

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I have noted that in many respects there is a growing tendency on the part of the people to rid themselves of guiding strings and to think for themselves. But time will be required for the development of this tendency into a general principle of life, and meanwhile the peasants will go to the poll and send to Parliament members who are not representative in the sense in which we understand the word in England. As there are but few contested elections, except in the north, there is no heckling of members by the constituents, or any regular account of his stewardship afforded by the member. When the Nationalist legislators visit their constituencies, they merely indulge in tirades against the English Government and the Castle. But you may search a year's records in vain to find the outline even of a constructive policy beyond the establishment of an Irish Parliament in Dublin. I do not feel at all sure that if the average voter were told the nature and composition of the Irish Parliament as it would be constructed by, let us say, Mr. John Redmond or Mr. Dillon, he would approve of it. But as this information is not likely to be vouch-safed, and as the Nationalist members will not

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spontaneously supply it, the Irish voter will for some time to come remain in ignorance of what he wants, and of unhappiness because he does not get it.

The alternatives to the existing relations between Ireland and Great Britain are (1) Separation, (2) Independence on the lines of Colonial autonomy, (3) Devolution. All are objectionable and inadmissible, but in my judgment, at any rate, Devolution is worse than Home Rule, and Home Rule than Separation. One of the most distinguished and scholarly Irishmen that I met said to me, "If I were an Englishman, instead of being an Irishman, I should advocate the complete separation of the two countries. You would then show to the world who are really responsible for the backwardness of Ireland and for the grievances always attributed to English rule. It would, it is true, be the ruin of Ireland, and men of my class would go under altogether, but after all there is no commandment to rescue a drowning man who persistently punches your head whenever you attempt to help him."

But, of course, Separation is out of the

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question, for two paramount reasons out of many. In the first place, the shock to Imperial prestige caused by the surrender of what some one has called our oldest colony would be fatal, apart from the strategic danger that it would involve. That objection, of course, is met by the retort that Great Britain refuses to repeal the Act of Union for selfish reasons. The other objection, however, is a moral one, and, so far from being selfish, demands sacrifices on the part of England. Although it is the fact that the Irish and their partisans grossly exaggerate the wrongs they suffered at the hands of England in bygone centuries, it is true, and is admitted, that injustice was meted out to Ireland in the past, and that wrongs were inflicted which account in no inconsiderable degree for the backwardness of Ireland. We owe Ireland a debt of reparation, and it is no answer to say that Ireland would run all the risks, and treat the grant of complete independence as a final settlement of accounts between us, if we believe that Ireland, left absolutely to her own resources, would go to rack and ruin within the space of a few years. To give Ireland independence would be to

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multiply a thousandfold the catalogues of wrongs done to her by England.

It is not for laymen to discuss the strategic aspects of Separation, but it may be well to quote the opinion of Captain Mahan, the distinguished American officer, whose opinions are accepted as authority, not only in his own country, but in ours :—

It is impossible (he says) for a military man or a statesman with appreciation of military conditions to look at the map and not perceive that the ambition of Irish Separatists, if realised, would be even more threatening to the national life of Great Britain than the secession of the South was to that of the American Union. It would be deadlier also to Imperial aspirations ; for Ireland, by geographical position, lies across and controls the communications of Great Britain with all the outside world save only that considerable but far from preponderating portion which borders the North Sea and the Baltic. Independent and hostile, it would manacle Great Britain, which at present is and for years to come must

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remain, by long odds, the most powerful member of the federation if that take form. The Irish question, therefore, is vitally important, not to Great Britain only, but to the Colonies. The legislative supremacy of the British Parliament against the assertion of which the American colonists revolted, and which to-day would be found intolerable in exercise in Canada and Australia, cannot be yielded in the case of an island where independent action might very well be attended with fatal consequences to its partner. The instrument for such action in the shape of an independent Parliament could not safely be trusted even to avowed friends.

During my tour of inquiry through Ireland I met with a large number of honest Nationalists who assured me that the overwhelming majority of Irishmen did not desire Separation. Many of my informants were commercial travellers, who had no idea that the chiel among them was taking notes, and I hope if any of them should happen to read these articles they will forgive the innocent inquisition. This intelligent and most useful class of men probably knows more

of the real feelings of the small shopkeepers and traders in the towns and villages than any other class. There was such general uniformity in the opinions they expressed that, apart altogether from my personal belief in their truthfulness, it was obvious that they were stating the case as they knew and understood it. It was interesting and gratifying to learn that loyalty to and affection for the King were governing factors in the opposition they assured me was felt to Separation. And I have very little doubt that, so far as the rank and file in Ireland are concerned, they do not wish to snap the golden link. Unfortunately, the Irishman is so constituted, at least under existing conditions, that he does not think for himself, but indolently and often ignorantly accepts his opinions ready-made from the politician. Except in matters that affect him personally in his business, the peasant leaves either to his Parliamentary representative, or to a self-constituted body of local politicians, generally the least industrious and capable in the district, the care of his political conscience. And the politicians are committed to independence, which is only another word for Separation,

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partly because most of them would prefer an Irish republic to partnership with Great Britain, under the sovereignty of the Crown, and partly because their adherents and bankers in the United States will have it so.

On the occasion of the late begging pilgrimage to America, Mr. John Redmond, in a send-off to Messrs. Hazelton, M.P., and Kettle, M.P., after eulogising Mr. Patrick Ford, of the *Irish World*, said :—

I have always held the view that it was a strength to the national movement and not a weakness that England should realise that there was behind the men who were conducting the constitutional movement on the floor of the House of Commons a great unknown power waiting for an opportunity which might arise to have recourse if necessary to other methods to advance the cause of Ireland.

It must also be remembered that the Sinn Fein party is growing in Ireland, and is committed without disguise to an independent Ireland, freed from every connection with England and the British Crown. And, as I have

pointed out elsewhere, it is the more advanced party which always gets the upper hand.

I began by stating my opinion that Home Rule would be worse even than Separation. If this country ever consented to let Ireland go, immediate danger and historic shame would be our lot. But, at least, the thing would have been done, and done with. We should have betrayed those who had proved their loyalty to the United Kingdom in circumstances more trying and more testing than any subjects of the Crown have had to face in modern times. But, at least, we should have left them the opportunity of fighting for themselves, even though against enormous odds. If, on the other hand, we maintain a suzerainty over Ireland, as we did or pretended to do in the case of the South African Republic, we should be faced with the terrible alternatives of either ignoring the open oppression of former loyalists by an executive in Dublin, or, worse still, of employing the armed forces of the Crown to crush an opposition whose only crime was loyalty. That this is no imaginary danger may be proved by the utterances of the one member of the Nationalist party who preaches conciliation. Mr. William

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O'Brien, together with his few adherents, is practically boycotted by Mr. Redmond and the "orthodox majority," on the ground that he is too moderate. The extent of this extravagant moderation may be gathered from an extract from an early number of Mr. O'Brien's organ of conciliation, the *Irish People* :—

"Under the future conditions of Irish life," he says, "it is the Irish democracy who will be the unquestioned and unchangeable masters of the situation, and it is by the people's favour alone, by sharing their ideals, or at least disarming themselves of their old prejudices, that the Irish nobles and gentry of the future, if they are to live in Ireland at all, can ever hope to lead lives of influence and happiness."

It is an agreeable choice offered to Irish nobles and gentry, between exile and misery on the one hand, and on the other the adoption of Irish democratic ideals, let us say, on the question of paying debts.

I was told by many representative Nationalists of the intelligent class that the fears entertained by the minority that they would be

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oppressed and trampled upon by a Nationalistic Government in Dublin were altogether imaginary. Many of my informants gave as a guarantee the prospect which they believed to be a certainty, that a Home Rule Parliament would be composed of a class very different from the present representatives at Westminster. It did not seem a very flattering tribute to Mr. Redmond and his followers, but I confess that I could see very little justification for the hope thus held out. In a letter written to the *Times* on October 19, 1906, only two days before his lamented death, Colonel Saunderson justified the fears of his fellow-Loyalists, and said :—

The Irish people had a great opportunity of proving that our fears were baseless, and that the promises made on their behalf have been verified up to the hilt. What has been the lesson taught by Irish history in the last few years? The County Government Bill was passed for Ireland, which conferred on the Irish people the power of proving their love of fair play and their ardent desire to fraternise with their Protestant fellow-

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countrymen. What happened? In almost every case every Protestant and Unionist was swept out of public existence so far as it was possible, myself among the rest, and Roman Catholics and Nationalists were given entire control of those Irish counties where Protestants and Unionists found themselves in a minority.

There has been no pretence of selecting the best men, irrespective of politics, for the administration of county affairs. Men whose ability, experience, and impartiality have been universally recognised have been thrown out to make room for some village orator, who has never done anything to help or benefit his neighbours. And the explanation may be found in a speech made by Mr. John Dillon at Moville, on December 4, 1904, in which he said :—

I believe that in carrying on this great war against landlordism we are carrying on a war against English rule in this country, and that we are breaking it and destroying the machinery and the system by which our people have been kept in slavery for three hundred years.

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If this purely exclusive policy is rigidly applied under the Local Government Act, which gives the county council powers to make, mend, and maintain roads and bridges, collect the rates, etc., how much more stringently will it be enforced in a Parliament making the laws and handling the funds of Ireland as a whole? Nor, were local government in Ireland more successful than it is, could any practical analogy be drawn from its operations. The Act of 1898 was so framed by its authors as to prevent the local authorities from using their powers to ruin the landlords. The cost of unsound finance or extravagance fell upon the farmers themselves. No such limitations could be imposed upon an Irish Executive, responsible only to an Irish Parliament. The result of the creation of such a Constitution would be that the taxpayers of Great Britain would be called upon to find money to redress the grievances inflicted upon loyalists in Ireland by a triumphant Nationalistic majority. The other alternative would be too discreditable to contemplate, namely, that England should look on with sombre acquiescence while a class in Ireland, which had protested passionately

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against being subjected to the Nationalistic yoke, were being slowly bled to death. Even from the Nationalist point of view the grant of Home Rule would be disastrous. Everybody admits that the only solution of the agrarian problem is to be found in the extension and expansion of the system of land purchase. The money already advanced or promised by the Imperial Parliament, formidable as the sum is, will not suffice to complete the execution of the scheme. Where is the balance to come from? Not from Ireland itself, for obvious reasons. But does any one in his senses imagine that English capitalists will raise another hundred millions on no better security than the good faith of an Irish Executive Government, or that, on the other hand, any British Government would ask the House of Commons to sanction a further loan, which bankers would not look at without the guarantee of the Imperial Parliament, or, in other words, of the taxpayers of Great Britain? All the work of development and improvement referred to in preceding chapters would be brought to a standstill for want of money and want of credit. The very fact that, with negligible exceptions,

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all the Captains of Industry, the bankers, the landlords, and the other classes trained in administrative work, are Unionists, would exclude them from a Nationalist Government, and probably from a Nationalist Parliament. It is not necessary to assume that such a Government as would be created would be corrupt, for it is only fair to admit that, though there has been a good deal of jobbery in County Council patronage, there has been no evidence whatever of what can be legitimately described as corruption. But bungling is a more fruitful source of profligate finance than actual dishonesty. At the best we should see in Ireland under Home Rule an administration of bunglers in an assembly of amateurs. Moreover, as I have already said, so long as the Imperial Parliament retains even the shadow of supremacy over the establishment at Dublin, the House of Commons could not rid itself of responsibility for the failures of the Government which it had set up in Ireland.

From whatever point of view we look at the proposal, it is difficult to discover what other outcome there could be to Home Rule than chaos, oppression and bankruptcy for Ireland,

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and disgrace, discredit, and an ultimate load of great financial responsibility for Great Britain.

I said at the outset that as Home Rule was more objectionable than Separation, so Devolution, in any sense in which it would be accepted by the politicians, is more objectionable than Home Rule. The professed object of those who call themselves Devolutionists is to adopt the peculiarly English expedient of compromise. But compromise is only possible where both parties to a controversy accept it as a reasonable settlement of the matters in dispute. The Irish Nationalists dare not if they would, and would not if they dared, accept what Mr. John Redmond contemptuously described as a "qualified Indian Council to control our finances." He clinched his statement in these terms: "Let me say just this word when I speak of a settlement of this question; let me at any rate be clearly understood. I do not mean a half-way house. What I mean by a settlement of this question is an Irish Parliament and an Executive responsible to it."

This emphatic declaration was made on the

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eve of the last General Elections. There is no pretence or attempted hoodwinking about the matter. And Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, as everybody knows, has, to use his own elegant expression, "knocked the stuffing out of the scarecrow" of Devolution. The historic confession of faith uttered at Stirling on November 23, 1905, cannot be too often repeated. It was deliberate, and had been committed to paper before it was delivered.

The only way (he said) of healing the evils of Ireland, the difficulties of her administration, and of giving content and prosperity to her people, and of making her a strength instead of a weakness to the Empire, was that the Irish people should have the management of their own domestic affairs, and so far from that opinion fading and dwindling as the years passed on, it had become stronger.

And then followed the memorable passage :—

If he were asked by an ardent Irish Nationalist he would say his desire was to see the effective management of Irish affairs in the hands of a representative Irish

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authority. And he further said, if he were an Irish Nationalist he would take it in any way that he could get it. If an instalment of representative control were offered to Ireland or any administrative improvement, he would advise the Nationalists to thankfully accept it, provided it was consistent and led up to their larger policy, but it must be consistent and lead up to the larger policy.

It rarely happens in politics that the authors of a suggested scheme give to all whom it may concern a clear warning of the consequences involved by that scheme. The habit of minimising the probable results is far more common. No Devolutionist, however, who is in the possession of his senses, can possibly be mistaken as to the real meaning of the compromise he supports. Devolution can only be carried out by the co-operation of the Radical party and the Irish Nationalists, and the leaders of both these parties have made it as clear as human speech can, that Devolution is, and can be, nothing but a stepping-stone to Home Rule. The progress of the larger policy is not like

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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that of a train marked in Bradshaw by a mysterious sign which interpreted reads : "Can be stopped by signal." It is a through train, and if it arrests its journey at a little intermediate station, called "Devolution," it is only to water the engine and to give it power enough to complete the run. The Devolutionists themselves comprise a handful of amateur Constitution-mongers, and a much larger number of Irishmen, who, hating Home Rule in their hearts, are afraid to say so with their lips, but clutch at the straw, Devolution, in a desperate hope that it will save them from being swept over Niagara. With these people, who hug the fond belief that in Devolution there is to be found the final solution of the Irish problem, it is useless to argue. Common sense and the whole teaching of history, to say nothing of the frank declarations quoted above, are against them. Every vote, to modify a famous phrase, given for Devolution is a vote given for independence and ultimate separation. But though the consequences are inevitable, it is quite possible that some plan of Devolution will be adopted to quiet the consciences of the sometime Liberal Imperialists, and to save from a charge of

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## Conclusion

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flagrant breach of faith those Radical members in the Government, and out of the Government, who have pledged themselves that there should be no Home Rule Bill during the lifetime of the present Parliament.

I have given Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. John Redmond due credit for the frankness of their statements, but at the same time the policy foreshadowed is neither honest nor straightforward. Assuming for the moment what is not intrinsically probable, that a scheme of devolution based upon the representative system, and entrusting large powers to an elected body, succeeded in passing through Parliament, and that the next election should give a definitely hostile verdict to Home Rule, what would happen? It would be the most difficult thing in the world to annul a concession so recently granted; and were it cancelled the United Irish League would set in motion that perfected organisation of which I have spoken in earlier chapters. The heather would be fired over two-thirds of Ireland; and there would be a recurrence of intimidation and outrage such as necessitated the passing of the Coercion Act of 1887. On the other hand,

should the next Government shrink from revoking the Act of its predecessor, then the elected Board would concentrate all its efforts upon paralysing and ruining the administration of Ireland. The tactics employed to cow the House of Commons, in which the Nationalists were but a small minority, would be reproduced in Dublin, where they would form an overwhelming majority. And even if the next Parliament should ratify the policy of the present Parliament, and should support the larger policy of which the Prime Minister approves, the elected body in Dublin would be used as an effective lever to extort still greater and less admissible concessions.

Devolution is more objectionable than Home Rule, because, in any conceivable circumstance, it must give rise to disorder and disturbance in Ireland. It is possible, though not likely, that if a Home Rule Government were established in Ireland, it might for a few years conduct itself with moderation, and refrain from using its powers to oppress the minority. But no such hope is held out by any imaginable scheme of Devolution, devised to be a stepping-stone to the larger policy. It would only be

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## Conclusion

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created to prove that it was unworkable and impracticable. Nobody would be more disappointed if it proved a success than those who granted it as an instalment, or those who accepted it as such. The very members who would sit on this elected body would be men pledged by their past utterances to prove the utter insufficiency of such an expedient. No one who knows Ireland will doubt that proof would be immediately forthcoming.

A question, so often put to me in Ireland, when I expressed my objections to Home Rule, Separation, and Devolution, will probably be asked by any supporters of the Nationalist policy who have done me the honour of reading these articles : "What, then, is your alternative?" My reply is, in England, as it was in Ireland, that what the country wants at this moment is a rest-cure. For nearly forty years we have dosed Ireland with medicine and stimulated her with tonics. The results, as shown by all material tests, have been so far satisfactory, though the doctor's bill has been a heavy one, that the patient may be regarded as on the verge of convalescence. The hopeful movements to which I have referred in the

course of these chapters, such as the growing intellectual emancipation of the peasants, the gradual extinction of the agrarian quarrel and the development of a spirit of self-help, now only require time and patience to achieve their objects. To re-open the serious politico-agrarian campaigns of the past would be to blight these buds of a future prosperity. We have never given any well-thought-out remedial measure for Ireland a real chance. Sometimes this impatience has been inevitable, as, for instance, when it became necessary to reverse Mr. Gladstone's system of dual ownership. It has taken a long time, but the reversal is now all but complete, and will be quite complete if we do not interfere with the machinery. It is a reproach to the present Republican *régime* in France that Ministries in Paris are but short-lived, but the evil is not so great as it would appear. France has not changed her Constitution for nearly forty years, and there is no evidence whatever of a disposition to upset it. And it is true of France, outside Constitutional questions, *plus cela change, plus c'est la même chose*. That is why the rise and fall of Ministries are accepted with philosophic in-

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## Conclusion

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difference outside the walls of the capital. It is hardly necessary to quote the case of the United States of America, where, in practice, nothing but universal consent or a revolution could effect any material change in the Constitution, or in any of the fundamental conditions upon which society is based. In Ireland, however, the substitution of one Ministry for another in the Imperial Parliament involves a change of policy in the system of Irish administration. I anticipate the criticism which will naturally be raised, that this argument is one in favour of Home Rule. That, however, is a fallacy. Nobody who knows Ireland would affirm that grave changes, constitutional and social, would be less frequent under a Nationalist Parliament in Dublin than under the authority of the Imperial Parliament. There are disruptive forces in Ireland which are kept inactive at present owing to the authority of Westminster, in which it must be remembered that Ireland is far more liberally represented than England, Scotland, or Wales. From the moment that a Home Rule Government was established on College-green these disruptive forces would come into play, with disastrous

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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results to all interests and all classes. It is because I believe that Home Rule, or any petty substitute for Home Rule, would be far more ruinous to Ireland than it would be dangerous to Great Britain, though that danger would be great, that I am a much more uncompromising Unionist than I was twenty years ago. All material grievances of which the peasants of Ireland, rightly or wrongly, complained, have been or are being redressed under the present system. Is it too much to ask that a sufficiently long period should be granted to enable the good seed sown so laboriously during the last twenty years to grow and ripen into harvest? The parable of the wheat and tares was preached in vain if we are to plough up the promising young crop in order to plant fresh seeds, of the fruits of which we know nothing.

The other alternative is a terrible one. For if the experiment of granting virtual independence to Ireland failed, we should have, on the one hand, to put down her Government with a strong hand, and plunge the country into civil war; and, on the other, to repair the ravages of this desperate expedient, we should have to call upon the taxpayers of Great Britain to

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## Conclusion

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make sacrifices for Ireland far beyond any that have ever been demanded in the past.

Perhaps I cannot close these chapters more appropriately than by quoting the eloquent words of the late Mr Lecky, which appeared in an essay entitled *Why I am not a Home Ruler*.

In the lifetime of those who have attained middle age, three great works have been accomplished in the world which far transcend all others in importance, and of which it is probably no exaggeration to say that the memory can never pass while the human race remains upon this planet. One of them, which is connected with the great name of Cavour, was the movement of unification, by which the old and illustrious, but weak, because divided States of Italy were drawn together and fused into one great and prosperous kingdom. Another, which is chiefly connected with the name of Bismarck, was that movement of unification which has made Germany the most powerful nation upon the Continent. The third, which may, I believe, be thought the most important of the three, was due much less to the genius

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of any statesman than to the patriotism and courage of a great democracy. It was the contest of America with the spirit of secession which had risen within its border ; and although that spirit was spread over a far larger area than Ireland, although it existed over that area in a far larger proportion of the population than in Ireland, and was supported by an immeasurably greater amount of earnestness and self-sacrifice, it has now disappeared, and the present generation have, in all human probability, secured for centuries the unity of the great Republic of the West. These great works of consolidation have been the contributions of other nations to the history of the nineteenth century. Shall it be said of English statesmen that their most prolific and most characteristic work has been to introduce the principle of dissolution into the very heart of their Empire ?

And, if it should have to be so said of English statesmen, shall it be said of the democracy of this country ?

FINIS

## APPENDIX A

IN October of 1906 there appeared a series of articles in the London *Statist* advocating Devolution on the ground of the diminishing prosperity of Ireland.

It was stated, *inter alia*, that :—

“Ireland remains . . . without manufactures, except in the north-eastern corner of Ulster, and even there the one solitary industry has made no material advance. Wages are miserably low and the general condition of the people is so bad that for sixty-five years they have been flying from their native land as if it were plague-stricken. During those sixty-five years Ireland has had no effective voice in the management of her own affairs. In the House of Commons her representatives do not number one-sixth of the whole.”

In reply to this and other articles, one of the best known and most successful men of business in Belfast addressed to the editor of the *Statist* a letter, of which the following is a copy :—

“*Belfast,*  
“*6th November, 1906.*

“SIR,

“If the articles in the *Statist* of 20th and 27th October had appeared in a professedly political paper they might have been disregarded. But, supported

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by the authority of one of the leading financial journals, they may mislead Englishmen ignorant of Irish affairs. Therefore, Sir, I request you to do an act of justice by inserting the following letter, which I venture to hope will expose the profound ignorance of the writer with regard to the political and economic condition of the country.

"One of the statements is true, the others untrue or misleading, whilst the whole presents a distorted picture of the country. It is true that the population of Ireland in 1901 was about half the number of 1841, but the statement that wages are miserably low and that people are flying from the land as if it were plague-stricken is utterly mistaken. Although the population has decreased, the condition of those who remain has immensely improved, and the state of the people as a whole is little below the average of England or Scotland. Before the famine of 1847-48 that terrible calamity which was in some degrees a blessing in disguise, because it put an end to an intolerable state of things, a large proportion of the population occupied holdings so small as to be uneconomic and were constantly on the brink of starvation. Emigration has relieved this congestion in all parts of the country, save that comparatively small portion which has been placed under the charge of the Congested Districts Board and which has in consequence experienced vast improvement. In the rest of the country comfort, if not prosperity, prevails. Wages have more than doubled in fifty years. There is less unemployment than in England. Emigration continues, it is true, but on a diminished scale, and

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can be traced partly to causes far other than those assigned and partly to the same impulse which leads English and Scotch labourers to forsake the country-side for the town. Farmers with reduced rents and raised prices for their produce are exceedingly prosperous.

"You say, 'Ireland has had no effective voice in managing her own affairs.' This must be her own fault, for having only one-tenth of the population of the United Kingdom, she supplies one-sixth of the representatives of the House of Commons. The over-representation of Ireland is nothing less than a public scandal, which ought to have been ended before plural voting was touched. Irish local Government is identical with that of England and Scotland, Members of County Councils, City Corporations, and Urban and Rural District Councils being all elected by the people. You say, 'the right of public meeting depends on the good pleasure of the police.' As a matter of fact, the liberty accorded to public speakers in Ireland has degenerated into license, and is such as would be tolerated by no Government in the civilised world except that of Great Britain. Meetings are proclaimed only: (1) when the neighbourhood in which they are to be held is in such a state of ferment that inflammatory speeches would incite to violence, or (2) when there is danger of collision between the opposing parties.

"You say: 'She remains now, as at the beginning of the period, without manufactures, except in the north-eastern corner of Ulster, and even there the one solitary industry has made no material advance.'

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It is notorious that there are two great industries in Belfast, both immensely prosperous, viz :—the linen industry and ship-building. The linen industry of Ulster is the greatest in the world. It has held its own whilst the same industry in England has become almost extinct, and in Scotland has diminished by more than fifty per cent. Besides there are in Belfast many important industries, machine shops, builders' yards, and makers-up of linen in various forms. In Londonderry there is a great manufacture of shirts and collars.

“ Education undoubtedly ought to be improved—but much has been done in the direction of technical instruction. The writer seems, however, to think that if such instruction were widely given, industries would spring up. Education never brings industries and never will : education brings industries to perfection ; but technical instruction without industries to which it may be applied is wasted effort.

“ It was generally supposed that the conclusions of the Financial Relations Committee had been long since exploded. No arguments that I have met with have explained to me, who must therefore submit to be classed with the ‘dull-witted people,’ why an Irishman with an income of £1,000 a year, free from various taxes which an Englishman must pay, with cheaper rent and necessities of life, should escape the Income Tax—nor why the Irishman who drinks whisky is harshly treated because he has to pay the same excise duty as an Englishman or Scotchman.

“ In conclusion, although Ireland has during the last sixty-five years made enormous advance in

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material prosperity, evidenced by the continuous growth of deposits in the banks, she would have gone further in this direction but for the incessant political agitation which has prevented the establishment of a sense of security and therefore prevented the inflow of English capital, the one thing needful to develop the natural resources of the country. If your influential journal, instead of encouraging the feeling of dissatisfaction, will insist on the cessation of political agitation, you will be contributing to the real interests of Ireland.

“I remain, Sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“IRISH MANUFACTURER.”

The Editor of the *Statist*, acting of course within his rights, refused to publish more than an extract, and on this excerpt based a severe criticism. The writer retorted, and his second letter was not published. This is a copy thereof:—

“Belfast,

“3rd December, 1906.

“SIR,

“It seems unusual for a journalist to refuse to publish the letter of a correspondent and yet to answer it by an article in which part of the letter is published, part suppressed, yet adversely criticised. But although such tactics place the correspondent at serious disadvantage, I am not going to shun the encounter.

“In your original articles of 20th and 27th October,

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you stated that, ‘The general condition of the people is so bad that for sixty-five years they have been flying from their native land as if it were plague-stricken,’ and that, ‘During the sixty-five years Ireland has had no effective voice in the management of her own affairs.’ I shall deal with the latter of these propositions first. As you omit the portion of my letter which in answer to this pointed out that Ireland has in fact a much too large share of Representation in the House of Commons, being represented in the proportion of one to six voters, instead of one to ten, while local government is on exactly the same representative footing as in England and Scotland, and do not attempt to justify your assertion, I assume that you recognise your mistake and abandon the false position you took up.

“ You seek to support your first proposition by statistics of agricultural wages in England, Scotland and Ireland, quoted from Fox’s Report of 1902. You omit, however, to add the qualification which follows, viz :—

“ ‘ It will be observed that the earnings in Ireland are considerably lower than in England, Wales, or Scotland, and there is no doubt that the position of a farm labourer in Ireland is not so good as in other parts of the United Kingdom, but it may be added that he gets his house and fuel cheaper, and frequently has the opportunity of renting land on which he grows potatoes, and keeps pigs, goats and poultry. In the case of herds and some others of the more skilled men, cows are not infrequently kept. Upon the sale of eggs, fowls and pigs many of the Irish farm

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labourers are said to rely for an addition to their incomes. Farm labourers regularly attached to the staffs of farms are said to live more comfortably than some of the small farmers.'

"This qualification suggests that it is always difficult to compare wages, especially in the agricultural industry in different districts. Conditions of employment in Ireland are so totally different from those which are customary in England as to make any such comparison exceptionally difficult in the present instance. While it may be true that the average cash wages in Ireland are considerably lower than in the rest of the United Kingdom, it is a remarkable fact that in Ireland the estimated increase of wages is greater than in England and Wales. According to the same report (page 5) between 1850 and 1903, wages in England and Wales have increased by fifty-eight per cent., and in Ireland by eighty per cent. Since 1870 wages in England and Wales have increased by twenty-three per cent., but in Ireland by forty-two per cent. Since 1880 the increase was eleven per cent. in England and Wales, and twenty-five per cent. in Ireland; since 1890 the increases have been the same in both countries.

"It is difficult to see how in the face of these facts taken in connection with the enormous decrease of pauperism and increase of saving (which you are unique among economists in regarding as evidence of 'decay') your question as to whether 'Ireland has shared in any degree in the universal prosperity,' can be answered in any other way than the very opposite of that which you have adopted. It must be

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remembered that Ireland started sixty-five years ago from a much lower level than England or Scotland. Although wages and wealth are still far below the height reached in the sister islands, her rate of progress has been much greater. It is also true that Ireland has not reached the stage attained by Denmark and Switzerland; but she started much later in the race, and her people, gifted with many interesting and attractive qualities, do not for the most part possess the serene temperament and steadfast perseverance of the Scandinavians, nor the passionate industry of the Swiss. It was not until, through the disinterested efforts of Sir Horace Plunkett, the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction was a few years ago started in Ireland, that any serious attempt to develop the latent capacity of her people was made. It is doing a great and growing work, but has not yet had time to fully develop.

"One would gather from your article that the prosperity of the south and west is checked by the hostility of the north. Never was a more unfounded belief. The Northerns joined with the people of the south and west in asking for the creation of the Department of Agriculture, which was instituted chiefly for those parts of Ireland where industries did not exist, and have given hearty support to it since its establishment. The Northerns are as desirous of the welfare of this country as the natives of other parts. They are not unmindful of *Æsop's* fable of the 'Belly and the Members' and are too 'good men of business' (as you describe them) not to

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recognise that if one member suffer all the members suffer with it. Therefore, for reasons not purely altruistic, they desire the prosperity of their country. The great gulf that yawns between Protestants and Roman Catholics cannot be said to be of the Protestant creation. The authorities of the Roman Catholic Church look with disfavour on association between the laity of the two creeds, with the result that, although the State has provided elementary schools and a university on a purely secular basis and free from any religious bias, the youth of the country are obliged to grow to manhood without any opportunity of mingling or of learning mutual respect and tolerance.

"Ireland has shared in the prosperity of the last sixty-five years and would have advanced much further but for the endemic political agitation which has been persistently fomented by persons seeking and finding their own advantage in its perpetuation. This unceasing agitation has disturbed the minds of the people and withdrawn them from attention to their regular pursuits. It has repelled the influx of capital, which is the life-blood of Industry. Morally, socially, and materially, it has made its evil influence felt.

"In conclusion I venture to think I have succeeded in showing that you have failed to make good your original propositions, and that candid readers will agree that Ireland is not a land 'from which the people are flying as from a plague-stricken country,' where 'the people have no effective voice in the management of their own affairs,' and which 'has

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## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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failed to enjoy a full share of the prosperity of the last sixty-five years.'

"I remain, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"IRISH MANUFACTURER."

With regard to the employment of what may be called the emigration argument, Lord Dufferin's pamphlet published in 1867, on *Irish Emigration and the Tenure of Land in Ireland*, contains much interesting information. For instance, he points out, p. 63, that:—

"The total number of holdings in Ireland containing fifteen acres and upwards has increased enormously since 1841. In fact, there are now (1862) nearly twice as many small farmers—using the term in what in England would be thought its most modest acceptation—as there were before the famine. This will undoubtedly be considered an extraordinary statement, but it is nevertheless the fact that holdings of between fifteen and thirty acres have increased by 61,000 or 78 per cent. within the last twenty years, and holdings above thirty acres by 109,000 or 224 per cent. during the same period, while those between five and fifteen acres have decreased by less than half those amounts ; the emigration, so far as it has extended to the occupying class at all, having been chiefly confined to the poor people who attempted to get a living out of bits of land ranging from half an acre to five or six acres, and whose destiny no custom or law of tenant right, however liberal, could materially affect. This is sufficiently established by the fact of something

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like 100,000 holdings of this description having disappeared in Ulster."

TABLE SHOWING THE SIZE OF FARMS IN IRELAND  
FROM 1841 TO 1901.

		Number.	Per Cent.	Decrease in No. of Holdings per Decade.
<b>1841.</b>				
Above 1 Acre and not exceeding	5 Acres .	310,436	44'9	—
" 5 Acres "	" 15 "	252,799	36'6	—
" 15 "	" 30 "	79,342	11'5	—
" 30 "	" . . . . .	48,625	7'0	—
Total above 1 Acre	. . . . .	691,202	100'0	—
<b>1851.</b>				
Above 1 Acre and not exceeding	5 Acres .	88,083	15'5	—
" 5 Acres "	" 15 "	191,854	33'6	—
" 15 "	" 30 "	141,311	24'8	—
" 30 "	" . . . . .	149,090	26'1	—
Total above 1 Acre	. . . . .	570,338	100'0	120,864
<b>1861.</b>				
Above 1 Acre and not exceeding	5 Acres .	85,469	15'0	—
" 5 Acres "	" 15 "	183,931	32'4	—
" 15 "	" 30 "	141,251	24'8	—
" 30 "	" . . . . .	157,833	27'8	—
Total above 1 Acre	. . . . .	568,484	100'0	1,854
<b>1871.</b>				
Above 1 Acre and not exceeding	5 Acres .	74,809	13'7	—
" 5 Acres "	" 15 "	171,383	31'5	—
" 15 "	" 30 "	138,647	25'5	—
" 30 "	" . . . . .	159,303	29'3	—
Total above 1 Acre	. . . . .	544,142	100'0	24,342
<b>1881.</b>				
Above 1 Acre and not exceeding	5 Acres .	67,071	12'7	—
" 5 Acres "	" 15 "	164,045	31'1	—
" 15 "	" 30 "	135,793	25'8	—
" 30 "	" . . . . .	159,834	30'4	—
Total above 1 Acre	. . . . .	526,743	100'0	17,399

## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF FARMS IN IRELAND (*continued*).

		Number.	Per Cent.	Decrease in No. of Holdings per Decade.
<b>1891.</b>				
Above 1 Acre and not exceeding 5 Acres .		63,464	12·3	—
" 5 Acres     "     "     15     "		156,661	30·3	—
" 15     "     "     "     30     "		133,947	25·9	—
" 30     "     "     "     "     "		162,940	31·5	—
Total above 1 Acre . . . . .		517,012	100·0	9.731
<b>1901.</b>				
Above 1 Acre and not exceeding 5 Acres .		62,855	12·2	—
" 5 Acres     "     "     15     "		154,418	29·9	—
" 15     "     "     "     30     "		134,091	26·0	—
" 30     "     "     "     "     "		164,483	31·9	—
Total above 1 Acre . . . . .		515,847	100·0	1,165

Even after the emigration caused by the Great Famine, there were more people in Ireland to the acre, engaged in different forms of agriculture, than there were in almost any agricultural country in Europe. To quote Lord Dufferin again :—

“From the foregoing statistics it would appear that the same amount of labour which is found sufficient in England to cultivate eleven and a half acres in a highly efficient manner is employed in Ireland in the imperfect cultivation of six acres. In other words, whereas in Ireland it takes four men to raise fifteen tons of grain off twenty-four acres, in England only two men are required to raise eighteen tons off twenty-three acres.”

The following figures are taken from a pamphlet issued by the Irish Union Alliance ; these statistics have been gathered from official sources.

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## Appendix A

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"As regards commercial progress under the Union Ireland has had an abundant share. In 1852 the revenue of Ireland was four and a half millions. In 1885 it had advanced to eight millions. In 1905 (Thom's Directory, 1906) the amount is £11,340,500. The shipping of Ireland entering Irish ports in 1852 showed a tonnage of five millions. It is now over thirteen millions. In 1852 the Excise Duties of Ireland were one and a half millions. These have grown (in 1905) to £5,471,000. Railways taken collectively afford a good measure of material progress. In 1842 there were in Ireland fourteen miles of railway, with £57,000 receipts. In 1890 there were 2,643 miles, with £3,042,000 receipts. In 1904 the mileage was 3,296 and the receipts £4,139,948. Deposits in Joint Stock Banks amounted in 1851 to £8,263,000; in 1890 to £33,325,000; in 1905 to £44,999,000. The Post Office Savings Banks, which are the popular banks with the Irish poorer classes, had in 1870 deposits amounting only to £583,165. In the year 1888 they had grown to £3,128,000. The deposits in 1905 amounted to £80,037,000."

## APPENDIX B

THE *Globe* of March 9, 1907, contains the following paragraph:—

We have received the following copy of a handbill which, we are informed, is being circulated among the domestic female servants of Dublin and its suburbs. The document is one of the most disgraceful and scandalous pieces of sedition ever perpetrated even by Irish disloyalists—

### “IRISH GIRLS !

“Ireland has need of the loving service of all her children. Irishwomen do not sufficiently realise the power they have to help or hinder the cause of Ireland’s freedom. If they did, we should not see the sad sight of Irish girls walking through the streets with men wearing the uniform of Ireland’s oppressor.

“No man can serve two masters ; no man can honestly serve Ireland and serve England. The Irishman who has chosen to wear the English uniform has chosen to serve the enemy of Ireland, and it is the duty of every Irishwoman who believes in the freedom of Ireland to show her disapproval of his conduct by shunning his company.

“Irish girls who walk with Irishmen wearing England’s uniform, remember you are walking with

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traitors. Irish girls who walk with English soldiers, remember you are walking with your country's enemies, and with men who are unfit to be the companions of any girl, for it is well known that the English Army is the most degraded and immoral army in Europe, chiefly recruited in the slums of English cities among men of the lowest and most depraved characters. You endanger your purity and honour by associating with such men, and you insult your motherland. Hearken to the words of Father Kavanagh, the Irish Franciscan patriot priest, who pronounces it a heinous crime against Ireland for Irishmen to join the forces of robber England. Do you think it is less a crime for Irish girls to honour these men with their company? Remember the history of your country. Remember the women of Limerick, and the glorious patriot women of the great rebellion of '98, and let us, who are their descendants, try to be worthy of them. What would those noble women think if they knew their daughters were associating with men belonging to that army, which has so often wrought ruin and havoc in Ireland, and murdered in cold blood thousands of Irish women and children. What English soldiers have done in Ireland in the past they would do again if ordered to do so. They would slaughter our kith and kin, and murder women and children in those horrible concentration camps, where ten thousand little Boer children died from want and suffering.

"Irish girls, make a vow, not only that you will yourselves refuse to associate with any man who wears an English uniform, but that you will also try

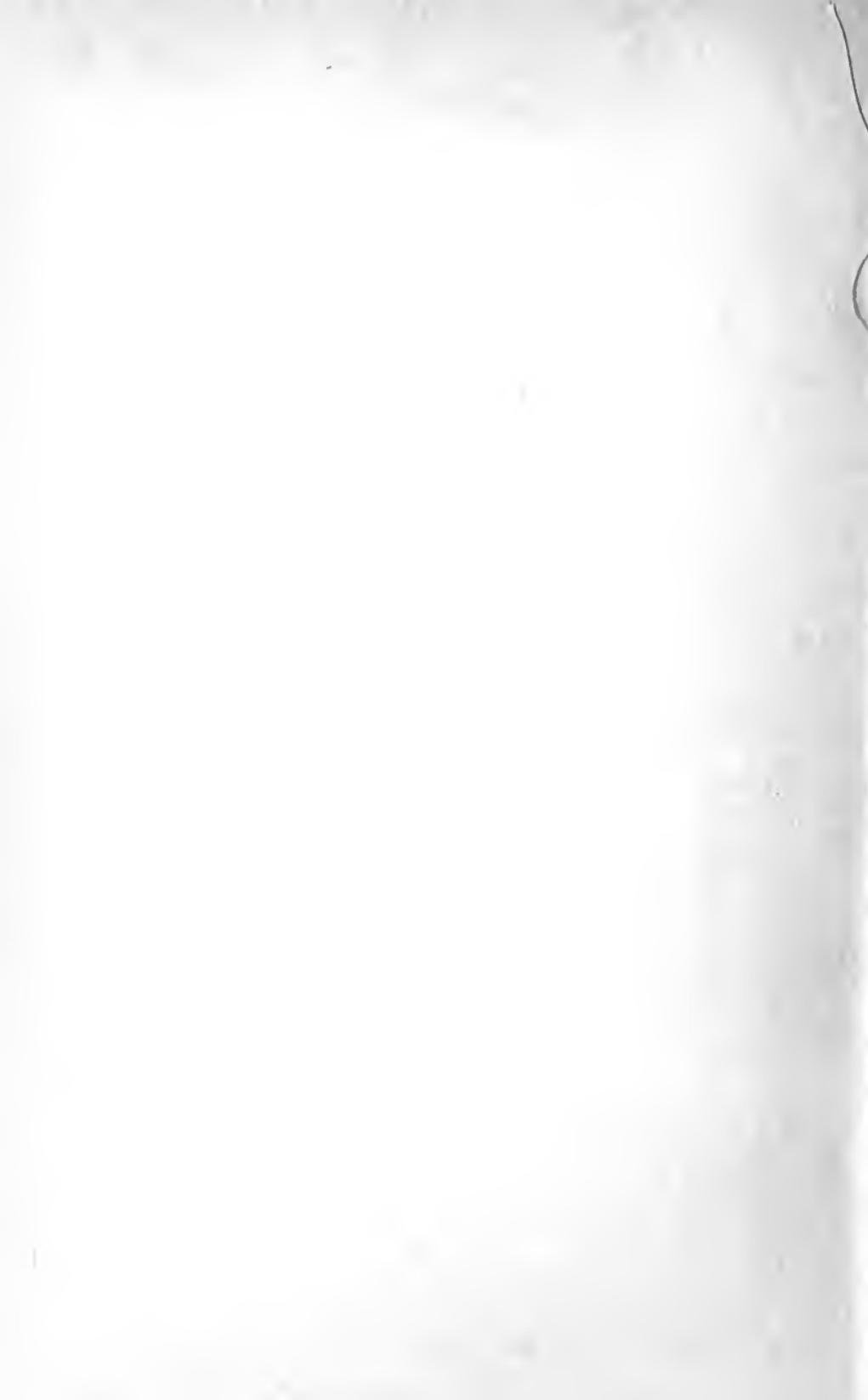
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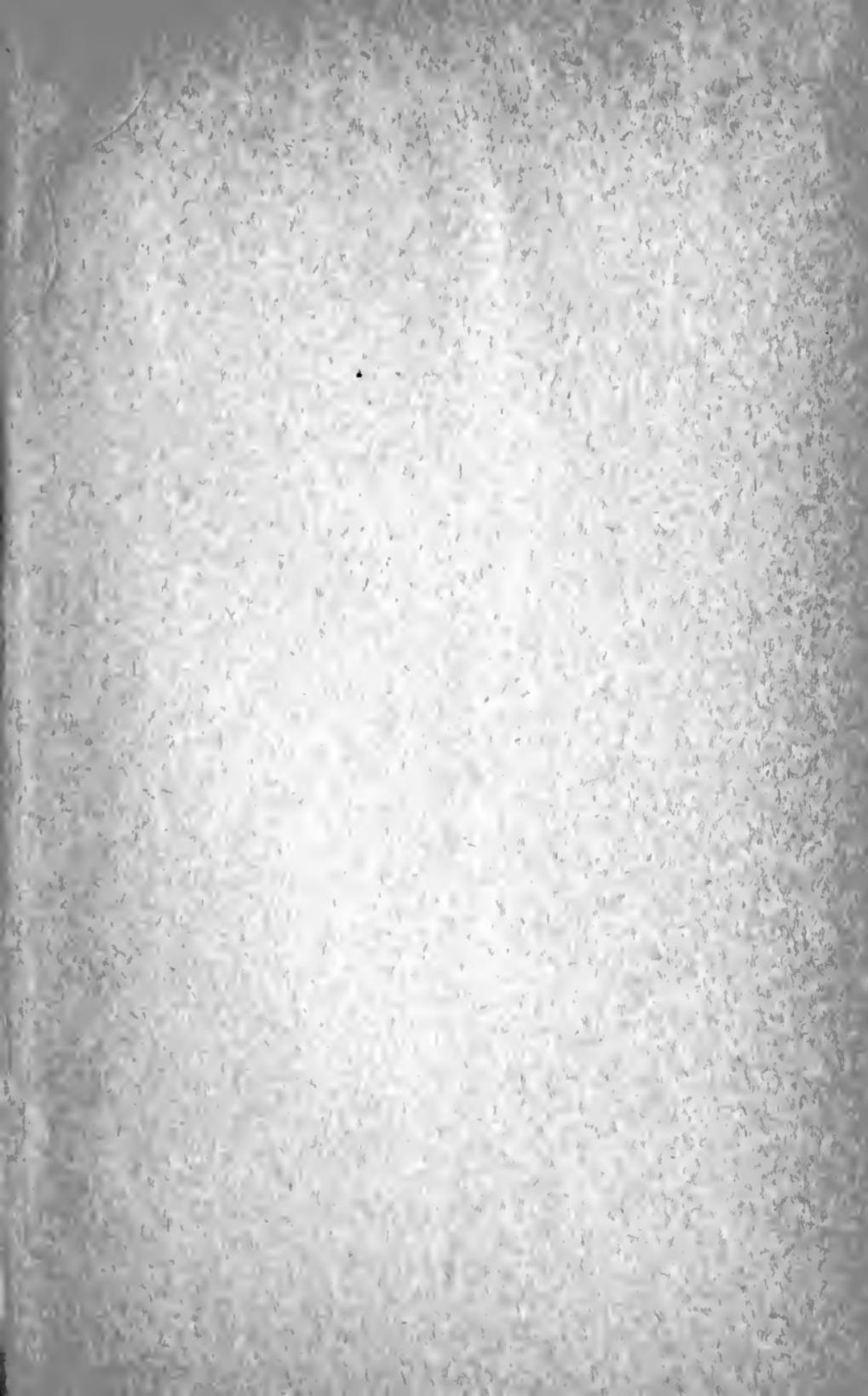
## Ireland To-day and To-morrow

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and induce your girl companions to do the same. Women's influence is strong. Let us see, fellow-countrywomen, that we use it to the fullest for the Glory of God, and for the honour and Freedom of Ireland (here are introduced some words in Gaelic characters). . . . are very anxious to get the co-operation of any girl who reads this handbill and feels she would like to help in working for Ireland's freedom and trying to save innocent country girls from the great danger which their thoughtless association with soldiers exposes them to. The Secretaries are always to be seen on Thursday evenings between 8 and 10 o'clock at (more Gaelic words) 22, North Great George's-street, Dublin, and we appeal to all Irishwomen to help us in this great social and national work."

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